and full dress on a cushion, the centre of the crowd of people who have 881
been invited for feasting, to have the ears pierced with a gold pin and 585
after this always to wear diamond ear-rings, but the ceremony has no
deeper significance than that the parent feels he has done the best for
his daughter at this stage of her life. The shinbyu, however, is much
more than a social event. It has a religious meaning of the fullest beauty.

Although the women of Burma figure as actively and have the 562
same rights as men in the fields of business, property, and professions 784
of the modern world, we always keep alive in us the religious feeling that
we are "below" mankind. It is not so much a feeling that women are a 189
lower race as that a man has the nobility of manhood in him. We call it
hpon, the glory, the holiness of a man, and we respect this not with
subservience but with the same feelings as we respect monks and parents.
A wife does not throw her longyi across her husband's bed, she does not
touch any of his possessions with her feet in carelessness, she uses a
separate mug for her bathwater. A bad wife who does not respect her
husband's manhood does him the greatest harm, for a man cannot
prosper if his hpon is hampered; indeed, some women who indulge in
black magic deliberately *hpon-nein* their husbands, that is, lower his hpon
by carelessly wielding brooms above his head, throwing women's longyis
on his pillow, thus making him subordinate, and believing that this
makes the wife's will prevail over the husband's. But such a man can
never make progress in his career.

It is the Buddhist belief that the attainment of a perfect life is as a 779
man, as shown in Gautama Buddha's life as Prince Siddhartha. Prince
Siddhartha was the son of King Suddhodana, who surrounded his son
with all the luxury and splendour that his kingdom on the slopes of the
Himalayas could offer. To prevent his son from renouncing his princely
life for one of poverty and meditation he kept all sights of sorrow,
sickness and decay hidden from him. He found him a perfect wife,
beautiful, meek and affectionate, who bore him a son; but the prince in
his excursions to a park in the city came across a decrepit old man, a sick
old man and a corpse, which sights made him sad at the thought of human
misery in this world. The next time, however, he saw a hermit which
suggested that peace of mind was achievable by renunciation of the
vanities of the world. On the night that his son was born, Prince
Siddhartha made the Great Renunciation and left everything to go into
solitude and find out the cause of misery, and the means of its removal.
The Dhammapada says of the world :

> Come! behold this world which is like a decked royal chariot,
> wherein the foolish immerse themselves; but for the wise
> there is no attachment.

779 881 792 It is this renunciation[1] which we symbolize in the shinbyu ceremony when a boy leaves his home and lives in the order. A parent who fails to hold the ceremony or get his son initiated in some other way fails in his first duty towards his son, and those who hold a shinbyu for orphans or the sons of the poor achieve great merit.

To provide a background symbolic of Prince Siddhartha's circumstances, parents spend as much as they can afford; a flagged pavilion is put up before the house, a multitude of people are invited for feasting, the boy is dressed in princely garments and jewels, and rides around the town on a white horse, with a procession following. For him to return and wash the powder off his face, to doff the turban and show the newly shaven head, to change the glittering clothes of silk for a plain yellow [292] robe showing golden on the bare brown skin,—this is moving indeed. And when he comes back the next day in procession with other monks, his eyes cast down and his bowl before him, his mother makes obeisance to him for the first time, not as her son now but as one of the priestly order, a hpongyi, a "great glory". That must be a moment of spiritual plenitude in a mother's life.

881 792 I do not remember much about my brother's shinbyu, but I remember the beauty of his face as he came back in procession on that first day. A good face has its nobility enhanced by the complete absence of such adornment, even as is provided by the frame of hair or the line of neck clothing; it has to stand alone. I am often struck with the beautiful calm faces of some older monks. There is a look of repose which they wear easily after years of daily meditation and freedom from petty irritations and personal relationships, and a glow to the brown skin which is the result of years spent in clean and open surroundings, with sufficient to eat, and regularity of hours; the strongly marked eyebrows giving a nobility to the face when the head has been shorn. The unconscious reflection of this look on the face of a small boy touches us profoundly; there is a sweet solemnity on the young shaven face; the most mischievous boys become awed and chastened without any prompting.

881 792 565 [563] In recent years, we have had a full dress shinbyu in the family for my husband's nephew, Sao Sai Long, who as the heir to the Shan State of Kengtung was initiated into the priesthood with the full panoply due to Buddhist royalty. A long wide bamboo pavilion was set up, beginning with a high shelf for the offerings to all the monasteries in the town, the next platform for the monks who were to receive Sao Sai Long into their monastery, the next lower for the attendant boys who were also to be initiated, and for the *palin* (the jewelled *chaise longue* on which Sao Sai Long was to recline), the next for the family, and successively lower ones for the various grades of the people. (The

[1] [i.e., The Great Renunciation of Prince Siddhartha--Analyst]

776
772 spirit knows no joy and no sorrow, but remains perpetually contemplating
775 the abstract truth, delivered finally from the cycle of recurring existences.

This arrangement of the universe and of the progress of man
772 through different levels of it, was but a reflection of the Buddhist ideas
779 of cosmography prevalent at the time when the religion was first in
flower. In our imagination they belonged with the distant Himalayas, the peaks too high for human sight, the clouds and mist on which a being with the Buddha's spiritual powers could ride in majesty. But whether every Burman Buddhist associates these regions with his daily life or not, there are few who, in the midst of their busiest worldly living, will not be excited, exalted, at the Canonical descriptions of the mind of the *arahat* when he becomes, by meditation and victory over the senses, ready to attain Nirvana. The following description is part of the Sammannaphala-sutta, one of the discourses of the Buddha :

"With mind concentrated, purified, cleansed, spotless, with the defilements gone, supple, ready to act, firm, impassible, he directs his attention to knowledge and insight. He understands that this my body has a shape, consists of the four elements, was produced by a mother and father, a collection of milk and gruel, subject to rubbing, pounding, breaking, and dissolution, and on this my consciousness rests, hereto it is bound.

"He then directs his attention to creating a mind-formed body. From his body he creates a mind-formed body having shape, and with all its limbs and faculties.

"He directs his attention to various kinds of magical powers. From being one he becomes many, and from being many becomes one. He goes across walls and hills without obstruction, plunges into and out of the earth, goes over water as if on dry land, passes through the air sitting cross-legged, and even touches the mighty moon and sun with his hand, and reaches to the world of Brahma.

"With purified divine ear he hears divine and human sounds both distant and near.

"He understands the state of the minds of other beings.

"The last three stages he attains are called the knowledges.

"First, the monk directs his attention to remembering his former existences. He remembers thousands of births and many cycles of existence, and knows that in such a place he was a being of such a name and clan, and had certain experiences and length of life in each of these births.

"Second, he directs his attention to the knowledge of the passing away and rebirth of beings. With divine purified vision he sees evil doers being reborn in hell, and the virtuous in heaven, just as a man in a palace may see persons entering and coming out of a house.

"Third he directs his attention to the knowledge of the destruction of 772
the asavas*. He duly understands, 'this is pain,' 'this is the cause of pain,' 779
'this is the cessation of pain,' 'this is the way leading to the cessation of
pain.' He duly understands, 'these are the asavas,' 'this is the cause of
the asavas,' 'this is the cessation of the asavas,' 'this is the way to the
cessation of the asavas.' When he thus knows and thus perceives, his
mind is released from the asava of lust, from the asava of (desire for)
existence, from the asava of ignorance. In the released is the knowledge
of his release; he understands that rebirth is destroyed, the religious life
has been led, done is what was to be done, there is nothing further
beyond this world."

At the New Year, then, the King of the tha-gyas, who are Dewas, 796
comes to visit the earth which is suffering its hottest and driest month 791
and looks to rain and coolness for deliverance. Before the descent each
year, brahmins and astrologers get together and calculate the exact hour
of his arrival, the means of his descent to the earth, whether astride a
buffalo, a *naga* or a *galon* and whether he wields a spear or a water jar, for
by these signs will the nature of the coming year be decided—heavy rains
or drought, good crops or disturbances in the land—and the duration of
his stay on the earth. All their findings are collected in leaflets which
are distributed as the *tha-gyan sa*, and when I was young I used to think
that they fell from heaven as prophetic messages. Actually the present
day practice is to fix April 13th for the official occurrence of Thingyan
each year. The celebration of the festival by pouring of water is to
honour the heavenly visitor, to wash away the old year's dirtiness and to
begin the new by good and auspicious deeds.

By the day before Tha-gya Min's arrival in Ye, the *a-kyo nay*, the 796
preparing-to-greet day, bamboo palisades had been put up along the
verandahs, arrangements had been made for communal celebration and
large-scale washing and feeding. All the girls spent the morning
grinding thanakha and other fragrant barks and the boys went out to cut
the leaves of the *the-byay* tree for the sacred water pots to be poured out
at the arrival of the visitor. In the evening, Grandmother and other
old people walked up to the rest houses near the monastery where my
father had been educated, for at their time of life, fasting, meditation
and the contemplation of younger people's enjoyment is the happiest
way of greeting the New Year. In the evening, too, we carried out
Grandmother's good deed of inviting a number of people from the
village to come and wash their hair. Hairwashing is part of the New
Year's rituals because the noblest part of the body, the head, must be in
a clean condition at this time. In the days of the Burmese kings, there

---

* Desires and impulses, expressions of the clinging to existence.

never talked about the business of their past working days when they 887
met. Sometimes they showed a fleeting interest in news of the postings 521
of friends still in service, but even the official matters of Thaton district
itself did not enter into their discussions. They talked of charity donations, [822]
of the respective monasteries which they endowed and attended, and
of formulæ of *eggaya-hto*, alchemy, or the search for the philosopher's
stone which will turn all metals to gold. Most Burmans get interested
in eggaya-hto during their later years, even if few now practise it.

This alchemy, which has no place among the true teachings of 822
Buddhism, has to be done under auspicious astrological influences and is 792
usually carried on in secret. Burman Buddhists condemn the use of it 779.
when it is carried on for *lawba*, greed for riches, but others justify the
process as a means of concentrating the mental faculties. The common
stories tell of hermits in the forests, who by their ascetic life and concentrated
meditation have more powers over the forces of nature, as
being well versed in the processes of alchemy. When such a hermit
achieves the extreme concentration of mind on his task he is successful—
the philosopher's stone is discovered, the body of the hermit then disappears
in the dissolving of matter, and his spirit is free to live unhampered
by the body, till the arrival of the next Buddha on the earth. Most
Burmese women, however, although they believe that this happens in
the case of hermits, object very strongly to the practice of alchemy on
the part of their menfolk, owing to the money and energy that is wasted
on seeking out new and expensive formulæ once the craze has got hold
of a man. All experiments are started with mercury which is melted
with other minerals, animal or vegetable substances which derive their
magical properties partly from their inaccessibility, partly from being
treated with prescribed rites. My father had no intention of taking up
alchemy and impoverishing us, but he too was very interested to hear of
the success and failure of various methods. These discussions must
have been kept well anchored to reality by the other chief topic of discussion—the
families of the pensioners.

The five duties of a parent towards his children include the settling 593
of the child in a good marriage. By the time the a-so-ya mins retire, 584
their sons and daughters have reached a marriageable age. The sons 554
are in the process of winning a good position in one of the government
services and their daughters have been dressed with an adequate 177.
amount of jewellery. The marriage market, which had no existence in 58
former Burmese society and which still is unheard of in Ye, and among 565
the poorer people, is now a very concrete institution among the educated
and modern classes. The rise of the minkadaw class and of higher paid
Class I government officials has been mainly responsible for this. More

matter of fact, the more noise there is going on, the more 876 work there is being got through. 872

Doubtless it is a primitive method—doubtless there are thick-headed boys with tough lungs who shout out the ka gyi, ka gwe (the A, B, C) with but the slightest portion of it remaining in their brains. There must be, because sometimes a boy takes a year to get through the alphabet (called the thin-bon-gyi, the "great basket of learning"), the combination of vowel symbols, and the alterations of sound effected by the union of consonants, all of which are mere materials, and only a very small portion of the complicated system of the language. Nevertheless everybody learns in the end, and then they are set to read in the same way, and gradually advance in the immemorial regulation subjects. The first books—all the books, in fact, put in the 872 boys' hands—are religious. They learn the five universal 779 commandments, the five subsidiary rules, the Pali formulæ 198 to be employed at the pagoda—pattering them over till they pour out of the lips with the fluency and precision of water out of a pump. When there are a number at the same stage in their studies, they repeat their lesson word for word after the teacher, sitting in wide rows before him, and all chanting with the same emphasis and apparently in the same key. The effect is very singular when a string of sonorous Pali versicles is being mouthed over in the striking intoned recitative peculiar to these formulæ. The twenty or thirty boys crouching down on their knees, their little heads every now and then bowing down to the ground over their hands joined in supplication, the yellow-robed monk sitting cross-legged on the dais before them, repeating in abrupt, jerky fashion the clauses of the form of worship, which the childish voices instantly catch up, forms a scene which never loses its novelty and attractiveness.

The little schoolboy slowly learns all these formulæ. 872 Even near to and in the larger towns of Lower Burma the 779 amount of secular learning, arithmetic, and so on that is learnt, is of the most meagre possible description. All relates to the tenets of religion—to the existences and teachings of the Lord Buddha. The things thus impressed on the youthful mind sink deep into the memory, and leave their mark

872 on the whole future life of the young scholars. As long as
779 these monastic schools are attended, all attacks on the
Buddhist faith must be fruitless.

872 Besides the commandments, the paya-shekho, and the
779 pareit-yôp-thi, the lauds of the Lord Buddha, and the
792 aspirations to be repeated at the holy shrines, the formulæ
to be told over on the beads; besides these first principles,
the young Burman is taught the thin-ki-ya, the rules which
are to prepare him for assuming the yellow robe, and to
guide him during his longer or shorter withdrawal from the
sinful world to the calm tranquillity of the monastery. He
must learn that the young novice carefully imitates the
decorous pace of the yahan; does not walk fast; avoids
swinging his hands; does not smile or laugh in passing
through a village, and keeps far away from all secular amuse-
[292] ments. The yellow robe, distinctive of the order, is to be
regarded not as a garment to cherish and comfort the wearer,
not as a robe to adorn the outward man and make it look
stately or pious, but merely as a concession to modesty,
born of the weaknesses of poor human flesh—and further,
as a means of enabling the worthless frame to endure the
[261] extremes of heat and cold. In the same way food is to be
eaten only to support life. The member of the sacred order
must not think of meal times as an occasion for gratifying his senses; he must avoid dwelling on the tastiness of
the food and the gratification to his palate which the pious
zeal of a supporter may afford in presenting an unusually
dainty meal. Especially must he refrain from eating food
to make himself strong and lusty. He must always remember
the transitoriness, the misery and unreality of the world, and
find relief in the Triple Consolation, the trust in the Lord,
the Law, and the Assembly.

All these things are impressed on the young pupil as
soon as he is able to read at all, every one of them assuming
the fact that as soon as he is old enough, or as soon as he
has gone through the necessary preparation, he will assume
the yellow robe of the devout, to wear it perhaps for life,
perhaps only for a day or two, but certainly to put it on, for
[885] without this he cannot attain to the full privileges of a man.
[777] His kan (luck) will be altogether one-sided. All the ill deeds

All the ill deeds 872

he does will swell the sum of his demerits, but not a single 779
good action, no uttermost act of charity or devotion, will be 792
recorded to his advantage for another existence. Without 775
admission to the order, without "Buddhist baptism," no man 186
can count his present existence as other than an animal's. The great gift of having appeared in the likeness of a human being; the happy balancing of merits and demerits which has resulted in so glorious an opportunity of advancing towards Ne'-ban; the still greater fortune of existence in a country where the tenets of Buddhism offer supreme chances to the weary seeker after rest from the moil of a work-a-day world; all will have been recklessly thrown away. It is written that more hardly will a needle cast from the summit of Mount Myinmo across the wide Thamoddaya Sea, more hardly will it touch with its point as it falls another needle standing point upwards in the great Southern Island, than will any given creature become a human being. How are the Western foreigners, black and white, to be pitied, who have indeed by earnest strivings attained the seat of man, but, arrived there, find it all naught because they do not hear the teachings of the Buddha! How much worse the Burman, to whom all his life long the monastery door stands open, to whom a week's, a day's, an hour's sojourn would offer boundless possibilities, and yet who enters not in. If this be so, what then can be the prospect for the boy who having put his hand to the plough turns back, who entering the monastery as a child, imbibes the religious thoughts and becomes acquainted with the religious creed, and yet fails to seek the "humanity" so easily to be gained? Better have been born an animal or an Englishman, and scoffed at what he did not understand.

Consequently it may be invariably assumed that the 871
little scholar, as soon as age and acquirements admit, puts 792
on the yellow garb as a finish to his education. This used 177.87
to include every one. Till the English came and took the country, everybody went to the Pon-gyi-Kyaung. But now there are English government schools; there are Burmese laymen's schools, which neglect religious education altogether, and look to competitive examinations as the end and aim of juvenile existence, as the ne'-ban of school life.

792 indeed in any monastery at all, even in Mandalay, it would
735 be promptly put a stop to. But where the monks them-
177-79 selves show the example of carnal weakness, the probationers
cannot be expected to maintain the old austerity.

792 The shin is subject in every way to the discipline of the
monastery, but there are very few additional rules really
● 779 incumbent on him. He has to observe always the Sè-ba
Thila, the ten commandments. Five of these are obligatory
on all Buddhists at all times: the other five are supposed to
be incumbent upon laymen only on sacred days and during
Lent. The five universal commandments are:—

1. Thou shalt not take any life at all.
2. Thou shalt not steal.
3. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
4. Thou shalt not lie.
5. Thou shalt not drink intoxicating liquor.

The additional five are:

6. Thou shalt not eat after mid-day.
7. Thou shalt not sing, dance, or play on any musical instrument.
8. Thou shalt not use cosmetics, or colour the face.
9. Thou shalt not sit, stand, or sleep on platforms or elevated places not proper for thee.
10. Thou shalt not touch gold or silver.

785 These latter five are, it has been said, imposed upon
796 laymen on sacred days, but the burden is very light, the
people observing them or not, accordingly as they are observing the "duty-day." If they are not "keeping the feast," they conduct themselves precisely as they would on any other day, and buy and sell and attend pwès in their ordinary fashion.

779 This laxity is, of course, not open to the shins, but it
792 cannot be said that the regulations, except perhaps as to
eating, are very irksome. The seventh and eighth commandments seem by themselves peculiar, but they refer to filthy habits more explicitly set forth in the Patimauk, or book of the enfranchisement, containing the 227 sins which

a monk is liable to commit. The ninth refers to the 779
common Oriental dislike to any person of insufficient 792
dignity occupying an elevated place physically above worthier people.

So far, then, the shin is not very grievously burdened 792
in the monastery. But the discipline maintained is very 861
strict. None of the ko-yins or of the boarder-pupils must be out of the monastic limits after the bell has rung. A lay scholar may get permission from the kyaung po-go to sleep at home now and again, but this indulgence is naturally impossible to the neophyte; he must always stay in the monastery. Again, the boarders may run home in the afternoon to get some dinner at their parents' houses, but this the shin cannot do. Breaches of the rules are very severely punished. The culprit's hands are tied high above his head to a post, and the castigator lays on vigorously on the naked back with a stout bamboo. Cases of deliberate cruelty of course occasionally happen, for human nature is the same everywhere, and a Dotheboys Hall is not an entire figment; but they are rare, and on the whole the shin is happy in the monastery, and occasionally in later life looks back with regret to the old, quiet, unruffled, careless life of the pon-gyi kyaung.

In Upper Burma it has actually been his school, for but 792
very few adopt the system of having private teachers to 871
instruct their children; and in Lower Burma it probably 184
contrasts favourably with the uncomfortable hard benches 177.87
and desks of the English institution, and the still more irksome quietness demanded, and steady, prolonged application exacted by the English teacher. Those who have been to both remember most fondly the long dusky monastery schoolroom, where they sat on the floor and shouted out their lessons, and now and again slipped out into the air to take the stiffness out of their limbs with a quarter of an hour at chin lôn, Burmese football. In the English school you learned to make money; in the Burmese school you learned to be happy and contented.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

required about the monastery. This done, the day-scholars go home and have their dinner, a few of the boarders perhaps gaining permission to do the same. The ko-yins, being under monastic discipline, are obliged to fast like their superiors. Most of them, and some few of the pon-gyis, go out for a staid and solemn walk round the village and out to the pagoda. Then, at sunset, the unmelodious, far-reaching notes of the kaladet summon all back to the kyaung. The strollers return immediately. None wearing the yellow robe may be without the monastery limits after the sun goes down, which occurs throughout the whole year close upon six o'clock. A short time afterwards the scholars are summoned before the abbot or some of the pon-gyis and recite steadily all that they have learned, from the Thin-bôn-gyi up to the book they have last committed to memory. If the kyaung is large and there are a number of students, this thorough process is, however, modified, and only the work at the moment being learned is required of the pupils. The Pali rituals are chanted with spasmodic energy, abundance of sound in most cases doing duty for a just comprehension of the matter. Very few of the religious could string a sentence together in Pali, far less speak the language, yet most of them can pour forth homilies and dogmata for hours on end, so that the poor ko-yins are not to be scoffed at for their parrot-like volubility. When this examination is over, if the sayā is an enthusiast, or if there is time, that dignitary himself delivers a sermon, or gives an exposition of some knotty passage, or perhaps there is a general conversation on some question of doctrine, or other subject of ecclesiastical interest at the moment.

792
[805]
788
792
779

Thus the time passes away till half-past eight or nine, when the evening is closed with devotions in the presence of the image of the Buddha. All assemble according to their rank as in the morning, and together intone the vesper lauds. When the last sounds of the mournful chant have died away in the dimly-lighted chamber, one of the novices, or a clever scholar, stands up, and with a loud voice proclaims the hour, the day of the week, the day of the month, and the number of the year. Then all shikho before the Buddha thrice, and thrice before the abbot, and retire to rest. None who

792
788
[805]

828 ignorant man's heart is all in one mass, while that of the
well-instructed divides itself into three small parts.

885 As models of married women are held up the Taw le-
779 wa, the most faithful and beautiful of wives, the consorts of
581 four of the chief princes in the ten great Jatakas, treating of
the last births of the Lord Buddha. To say that a girl is Taw le-wa win lauk, calculated to become like one of these four great queens, Amaya the wife of Mahawthata, the Solomon of Buddhist kings; Madi, the wife of Wethandaya, world-famed for his charity; Keinnayi or Thanbula, the partners of princes hardly less celebrated, is to pay the highest possible compliment to any woman. But these are somewhat vague and intangible matters. There are other recommendations which appeal much more directly to those intending to get married; to the man that seeks a wife, sanshwe, pure as "test gold"; or the girl who would avoid a linkwe, a "cur of a husband."

581 Prominent among these is the rhyme of "the hostile
787 pairs," the yan-hpet, who, if they marry, will certainly have
a short life.

Some violence is done to the niceties of language in the linga, so that I may be allowed the same in the translation of a portion of it.

Friday's daughter
Didn't oughter
Marry with a Monday's son;
Should she do it
Both will rue it,
Life's last lap will soon be run.

The same lamentable result would follow if the man were born on Friday and the woman on Monday. Again:

Saturdays and Thursdays,
The serpent and the rat,
You cannot find out worse days,
Life's short enough at that.

The serpent and the rat preside over Saturday and Thursday respectively. Similar curtailment of life would follow if the union was between Sunday and Wednesday, or between Tuesday and the eighth half-day Yahu. One or

231 more fortunate than his Malay congener in possessing a
tail, but asserts relationship with that animal in the possession
of a horny hook, with this difference, that the hard
excrescence is at the end of a tail of fair dimensions instead
of being humbly situated on the rump, as is the case with
the Straits tabby.

235 There are always some tame villatic fowl about the
house. If the householder does not aspire to the ownership
of a taik-kyet, a regular game cock, bred for the purpose, he
has at least a kyet-hpa, an ordinary cock of combative instincts,
and backs him against his neighbour's when occasion
offers, through the absence of the constable, by chance, or
by the influence of pecuniary profit acting on a sporting
disposition. A cock that declines to fight under any circumstances
is called a kyet nyaung-gan, and stands in great
danger of dying suddenly and being converted into curry.
Hens are regarded with indifference except in view of similar
possibilities, for their eggs are of no use. A fowl may be
killed by accident by a stick thrown at random, but the germ
of life in an egg cannot die unless it is boiled or goes rotten.
In the former case the boiler incurs mortal danger from
breaking one of the Five Precepts; in the latter the egg
223 is undesirable. In small villages almost every one keeps a
tè-gyet, a decoy cock, for luring the wild jungle-fowl. The
fore-doomed hunter kills the game, and the pious owner of
the decoy bird gets a good dinner. Similarly tè-gyo, pigeons,
are bred specially as lures, and so are partridges. Ordinary
pigeons, occasionally used for the same purpose, go by the
231 name of gyo-ta-nyin. Caged birds are not very common as
779 pets, though every here and there one comes across a hill
444 Mina, who has acquired a fair knowledge of the vernacular,
and astonishes passers-by with the unceremonious way in
which he hails them. But the Buddhist religion condemns
keeping animals in confinement. So much is this the case
that in Mandalay, and here and there in other places, there
are men who make a regular living by catching birds and
selling them to the pious, that they may gain merit by setting
them free. Crafty birdcatchers are able so far to disable the
bird, without doing it any material or visible harm, that they
can catch it again immediately after their tender-hearted
customer has gone his way.

Be 231 779 ●

customer has gone his way. It used to be a common thing in the palace, during the late king's reign, to let loose a number of birds for the delectation of foreign worshippers at the golden feet, and the expansion of the royal merit. Ill-natured people said all the birds were recaptured in the next room, and appeared again for the next display of charity; but of that I can say nothing.

Be 342 351

Ba. [563]

Be 487

Each house, with its ground, is surrounded by a rude fence more or less substantial according to the character of the district. Where there are many tigers or ill-doers, and especially north of Mandalay, where formerly the Kachins might swoop down any night, this is made very high and strong, and is further rendered effective by a formidable array of sharpened bamboos. Except where the British have taken the matter in hand, the village roads are simply places where the jungle is kept from growing. There is no attempt at metalling; in fact there is no material for the purpose. In some pretentious villages indeed there is a raised path formed of bricks set on edge, and about three feet broad. This is regarded as a public work of great value, and a distinction to the inhabitants of the place. It usually leads to the monastery. In many villages, however, it would be impossible to move about during the rains without some such contrivance. The mud would be too deep, and logs are slippery even to bare feet.

Be 854 352 533

Swinging by a couple of ropes from the roof hangs in the centre of the house a rude basket, made snug with a blanket or some old clothes. This is the baby's cradle, and the mother may often be seen sitting by it crooning and gently swaying it backwards and forwards. Some of the lullabies are very clever. I have tried to give a version of one of the most popular, with as near an approach to the metre as practicable. It is sung to the favourite te-dat air.

Be 539

SEIN-NI LA-YAUNG

Clouds in Heaven,
Bright as levin,
Dyed with rosy diamond's light,
Did the Nine Gems
Stud your white hems,

CHAPTER X

THE EARTH AND ITS BEGINNING

772 779 171 THE Lord Buddha cared very little for speculations, or theories as to the construction and extent of the terrestrial globe, or as to the size and motions of the sun, the moon, and the stars. Shin Gautama was entirely a moral philosopher, concerned with the workings of the mind, whose highest aim was to despise matter and free itself from such trammels in the progress towards Ne'ban. The consideration of natural phenomena was therefore entirely outside the province of the true sage. It is probable, therefore, that the transmogrified Hindu system which does duty for Burmese cosmography was elaborated rather by the Buddha's disciples than by himself. It has been altered only to suit Buddhistic religious views, with here and there the fancies of a lively imagination thrown in, but the outline of it existed before Prince Theidat came.

The Burmese are therefore certainly not responsible for it, but as some knowledge of the system is necessary for the comprehension of various superstitions, phrases, and forms of speech, it may be desirable to give a slight sketch of these astronomical and cosmical theories.

772 779 The word lawka means a whole revolution of nature. The world is being constantly destroyed and reproduced, but each lawka lasts an incalculable length of years. It is divided into four periods, and it is not till the arrival of the fourth period that man appears upon earth. During that last period, divided into sixty-four Andrakaps, the life of man must, in each Andrakap, wax from ten years to an Athinkaya (a time represented by a unit and a hundred and

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

772
779

sixty-four ciphers, one and a half quintillion years), and then gradually wane to ten years again, on account respectively of the merit and demerit in the world. We are now in the waning term of the eleventh Andrakap. The Buddhas only appear upon earth during the waning season of man's life, chiefly, of course, to stay the increasing influence of evil by preaching the law, and also because when man's life is slowly lengthening to an Athinkaya he is not so disposed to listen to their teaching. 100,000 years before the destruction of the world the Déwas come down from their six blissful seats and wander about the earth with dishevelled hair and mournful garb, proclaiming the sad tidings of the impending destruction of the world. Once again a hundred years before the cataclysm they come, and all mankind strives to raise itself beyond the influence of the destroying element. The world must be destroyed in any case, but there are three great principles of demerit which determine by what means the catastrophe will be effected. Concupiscence is the most common and the least heinous of these principles, and the world of the lustful will be destroyed by fire. Next comes anger, a more grievous sin than concupiscence, and the world ruined by the principle of anger will be destroyed by water. Worst of all is the sin of ignorance. The world of the ignorant will be scattered about the bounds of space by a mighty rushing wind, which beginning so gently as barely to sway the leaves and flowers, ends by breaking up with its irresistible force the vast bulk of Mount Myinmo and the Sekyawala circle of hills. Of sixty-four worlds, fifty-six are destroyed by fire, seven by water, and one by wind. Fire reaches to the fifth seat of the Rupa, the beings called Perfect. Water mounts higher by three seats to the eighth of the Byammās, and wind one seat beyond this. Out of the thirty-one seats of the world there remain therefore only eleven undestroyed. The Four States of Punishment, the abode of man, the six blissful seats of Nats; and five, eight or nine of the lofty dwellings of the Rupa, according to the destroying agent, are altogether overwhelmed and dispersed throughout space. The seven highest seats of the Byammās and the four of Arupa, where dwell the Immaterials, who having broken all ties with the material world, are ripe

772 for Ne'ban, these eleven seats only remain constantly
● 779 undisturbed.

Then there is chaos for an athinkaya. When that mighty season has passed, rain begins to fall again throughout infinity. Fire, water, or wind may destroy the world, but water alone can reproduce it, though both the sun and the wind have minor parts to play. The drops gradually increase in size till they reach the volume of five, ten, a
[804] hundred, even a thousand yuzanas (a yuzana being about twelve miles English). The wind blows the water together in the spot occupied by the last world. A greasy scum gathers on the surface. The action of the sun gradually hardens this into a crust, which eventually assumes the exact appearance and shape of the last world. The Lord Buddha himself, it is written, did not know which was the first world and which would be the last. Many learned writers say that there is neither a beginning nor an end to the production and destruction of worlds. It will go on for ever like a great wheel, even as the great wheel of the Law itself. Since sorrow then is shadow to life, how should all beings strive to escape from the vortex of existences? In the *Abhidhamma* we read that there are two descriptions of worlds, called Thôn-nya Kabā and A-thôn-nya Kabā, that is to say, worlds to which the Buddhas came, and those to which they did not come. Some think that the latter kind of worlds must have been uninhabited. However that may be, it is certain that the law has always existed. It existed Kalpas and Mahakalpas before the first Budh came to this earth. The Buddhas only revive the knowledge of it among creatures upon the painful ladder of existence. Our present world, called Badda, has been particularly favoured. Already four Buddhas have appeared, and when the dispensation of Shin Gautama shall have passed away, two thousand five hundred years hence, there will come another, Arimadéya, whose stature will exceed the highest mountains in all the Southern Island.

823 The system of the world as explained by the Buddhist
779 Yahandas is somewhat different from that adopted by
772 western men of science. In the centre is the Myinmo
Taung, Mount Meru, the highest peak of all the world. Its

823
779
772

shape is somewhat peculiar, like a cask floating end upwards in water. A height of 84,000 yuzanas above the sea is counterbalanced by as many of depth below the surface. It is supported on three feet, each a huge ruby or carbuncle. In the space between these feet dwell the Athura, the Nats who were tempted to drink by new arrivals in the seat of Toktheeta, and when overcome by the liquor were hurled into the sea by their crafty rivals. At various heights on the central mountain are ranged the six blissful seats of the Déwas, but many of them dwell elsewhere. Thus, for example, the sun, the moon, and most of the stars and planets are simply gorgeous dwellings of Nats. Away in the empyrean, rising perpendicularly one above the other, are the sixteen seats of Rupa, where the Byammās, the Perfect, dwell. These have got rid of almost all the passions, but especially of concupiscence. It is not till they have freed themselves from all affection for matter and material things that they can pass beyond to the incalculable heights of the four seats of Arupa, where the Immaterials dwell in a state of sublimest contemplation waiting only for the moment when they shall pass beyond into Ne'ban. Down below the earth, in a mass of hard rock, are the eight great Hells and the numberless smaller ones. Surrounding the Myinmo Taung and girdling round the earth are the seven ranges of the Sekyawala mountains, with seven seas interposed. In the sea round about Mount Myinmo, the great Thamôddaya Ocean, are the four great islands—Ottayakuru to the north, Pyôppawideha to the east, Aparagawyan to the west, and Zampudipa to the south. In the Southern Island dwells the race of man. Each of the great islands has five hundred smaller ones round about it, and in these islands dwell the English and other nations other than the Buddhists and the Indian heretics.

The Thamôddaya sea is too stormy to allow of any one passing from one of the great islands to any other. The Southern Island is the largest, and is shaped like a trapezium. The Western Island is like the full moon, the Northern is square, and Pyôppawideha is shaped like the moon in her quarters. The shape of the head of the different inhabitants follows the shape of the island, and the different sides

823 779 772 of Mount Meru give their different colours to each island. Thus the Eastern Island is all white from being opposite to the silver face of the mountain; the Western is green, because on that side Myinmo is of glass; the Northern Island glitters like gold, and the Southern is a pale-coloured brown-like carbuncle. Each island is named from the great tree which grows upon it and forms the sacred insignia of the island. Thus the Southern Island is named from the Zampu tree, the great Eugenia.

The Eastern, Western, and Northern Islands are very pleasant to dwell in, but especially the Northern. There the people live to the age of a thousand years, and always appear to be no more than eighteen. In the other islands they only live to be five hundred. In other respects the Northern Island is a regular land of Cockayne. The fabled Padetha Bin, elsewhere only found in the happy countries of the Nats, grows there. From its bounteous branches hang the most gorgeous dresses of every variety of colour, and the happy islanders have only to take them off. Nor are they at any necessity to till the ground to procure themselves food. From this tree they obtain also an abundant supply of a most excellent kind of rice, already husked to their hands. All that they have to do is to place it on a certain large stone, and it is forthwith cooked, and upon the branches of the trees round about appear the most dainty meats. Truly the Northern islanders have a most enviable existence. But in one respect, like the inhabitants of the Eastern and Western isles, they are unhappy. They are 779 715 always born back to the same island. They cannot raise themselves in the scale of being, like the otherwise sorrowful Southern islanders. Only in Zampudipa do the Buddhas appear to teach the law and free the people from constant deaths and reappearances. From Tahingaya, the first Buddha, to Shin Gautama, under whose dispensation we now live, there have been twenty-eight Buddhas, and all of them have come to the great Southern Island. To Byammās, to Nats, even to animals and the agonised dwellers in the lowest hells, the blessed words have come, but never to those other dwellers in the islands of the great sea Thamôddaya. Thus are men enabled to attain to the state of Nats, to pass

779
775

through the seats of Rupa and Arupa, until finally, freed from passion and sorrow and the trammels of matter, they sink into the bliss of Ne'ban. Therefore have pious writers of old called the Southern Island Ne'ban's ferry.

Down below the earth, in the deepest recesses of the Southern Island, are the eight great Hells, surrounded by [illegible],040 smaller ones. Four of the great Hells are called Awidzi, and in addition to other tortures, terrible flames leap from wall to wall across the monstrous space, and extend on all sides beyond for a thousand yuzanas. The other four are called Lawkantyè, and there, instead of flames, we find hideous cold. A day in any of these places of torment is as long as thousands of mundane years.

779
772

The world having been created is as yet uninhabited. Our present earth, Badda, was peopled in the following way, From the seats of Zān, to which the destructive element had not reached, came down certain Byammās, some say three, some as many as nine. Holy people as they were and freed from all passions, they existed at first, like Adam and Eve, in a state of perfect bliss and innocence. They were not as the Kāma, the generating beings of the Four States of Punishment and the Seven States of Happiness—that of man and the six seats of Nats. But, like Adam and Eve, they fell into sin and thence into misery. First we read that they prayed for light. We may imagine that already the spiritual light had forsaken them, for in answer to their prayers appeared the sun, the moon, and the stars. The holy people had hitherto lived on a flavoured earth, which, however, driven away by their growing desire for matter, vanished and gave place to another species of food, a sweet creeping plant called Padalata. This was perfect in odour and flavour, but still the appetites of the people grew, and the Padalata was taken away and in its place appeared the Thalé san, a peculiarly fine kind of rice, which grew ready husked, and had only to be put in a pot, when it would cook itself. But by eating the Thalé rice, the Byammās became more and more gross, until, like Adam and Eve after eating the apple, they attained a knowledge of good and evil, and marriage was instituted. After this the

779 772 Thalé san became more and more scarce. At first, no matter how much was eaten, at night the portion which had been cut during the day reappeared; but when the first people fell into the sin of lust the rice gradually vanished. Where the rice was cut in the morning, there remained a bare patch at night. Since then man has had to labour, and earn his bread with the sweat of his brow.

779 829 Owing to the scarcity, crime first appeared in the world. One man, fearing that his stock would not last him, went and stole from his neighbours' barns. Thus theft was the first crime committed in the world. The man whose rice was stolen at first only scolded the thief, and let him go. The robber, however, did not care for this, and came back a second and a third time. The third time he was seized and beaten. Thus out of the original crime of thievery arose abuse, reviling, assault, falsehood, and then punishments. In this way did crime and consequently law and justice take their origin, and have lasted since the very beginning of the world. Hitherto on account of the happy state in which the people had lived, without crime and without punishments, every one had been equal, and there had been no necessity for marking different grades. As, however, crime increased, and with it revenge, more or less sweeping according to temperament, the people took counsel together and resolved to appoint a man to be ruler over them, who should regulate their affairs and punish wrongdoers. Thus a king was first appointed, and his revenue was derived from tithes given by the people. Each man set apart a tenth of his Thalé san for the support of the king. The tithe system was kept up among the Burmese, the most direct in descent from the original people, until a few years ago. The kings extended the system. The rulers and governors of provinces received in place of salary the tithes of the districts which were under their charge. But King Mindôn Min, finding that with unscrupulous men the method was liable to abuse, abolished the system of tithes, and introduced the English method of paying a regular salary. It did not, however, work well. Many of the myo-sas, finding that they did not receive their money regularly from the State, continued to exact tithes as before, only secretly and with many cunning devices to hide

779
829

what they were doing. It is probable, therefore, that the custom of the ancients would have been reintroduced.

The appointment of a ruler to punish crime was therefore the second source of the law, and the first source of the administration of justice. The first king chosen was a Payālaung, a person destined in future ages to be a Buddha, and therefore of great sanctity and wisdom, and one who strictly conformed to the five natural and religious laws incumbent on all men, namely, not to murder, steal, commit adultery, drink fermented liquors, or speak falsely. From these immediately sprang the four thingahas or kingly laws, and the first laws laid down by the Payālaung were with regard to the twenty-five descriptions of theft, the ten kinds of assault, and the twenty-seven kinds of abusive language.

Notwithstanding the institution of a source of administrative justice, crime continued to increase, and those who wished to escape from its evil influences retired to the jungles and there built small houses for themselves, or gained a living by begging from village to village. Thus rose the caste of the Brahmins. Those who built themselves houses and acquired wealth by agriculture and trade, were called thaté thu-gywè, rich men, while those who were unfortunate and oppressed sank into the state of poverty and were called thu sinyè. Thus arose the legal classification of the people.

The first king, Mahāthamada as he was called, probably had a written code, but it has been superseded or lost. The laws which now guide us were drawn up by Menu, originally a cowherd, but afterwards a minister. To these laws all others owe their existence, for we read that in Greece, the earliest civilised country in Europe, Menu was styled Minos in Crete, and first gave them laws. In this way polity was established in the Southern Island. The original people soon greatly increased, and multiplied, and dispersed themselves not only all over the mainland, but some even went to the smaller islands round about, as did the English to the Pyi Gyi. Just as the children of one father take different names, so the different peoples took to themselves different titles, according to the part of the earth they settled in. Just also as some children in a family are good and some bad, so a few races preserved the sacred law of

779 929 the Lord Buddha, and some fell away into lamentable heresies. Many of them still retain reminiscences of the teachings of the Great Master. Thus the Bible of the Christian contains moral precepts in a great measure identical with the sentiments conveyed in the thoughts or sermons of the Lord Buddha. There is even confirmation in the mention of the ages of Methuselah and other men of old, of the doctrine of the waxing and waning term of human life. Some learned Sadaws have held that the Lord Jesus is Dewadat, the cousin of Shin Gautama, who was always trying to overthrow the good works of the Buddha; and it is well known that the Siamese speak of the evil Dewadat as the God of Europe, and the causer of all the evil in the world. This opinion is not, however, generally held, and the best thing a Burman can wish for a good Englishman is that in some future existence, as a reward of good works, he may be born a Buddhist and if possible a Burman. For that the Burmese are most nearly descended [103] from the original holy people, their name Byammā or Bamā evidently shows, while no other nation preserves the sacred law more carefully and more exactly in its form as it came from the lips of the Lord Buddha himself. Moreover, the Burmese monarchs retained the titles given to Mahāthamada, the first king, and his immediate successors, and therefore they ranked above all others.

CHAPTER XI

THE LADDER OF EXISTENCE

NOTWITHSTANDING the change, the pain, and the vanity of everything upon earth, yet the Lu-pyi, the Manôt-thabông, the state of man, is desirable beyond all others. Transience, misery, unreality prevail in all the thirty-one seats of the world, even in the twenty superior heavens, where those acted on by Kāma, generating beings, find no entrance. The Déwas come down to our earth from their six seats of bliss; the Byammās, even to the fourth state of Zān, are occasionally found in earthly guise in the precincts of holy monasteries; even Yahandas, who have entered into Thodda, the current of perfection, and after death attain the dreamful joy of Ne'ban, the cessation from existence, even these immaterial beings diffuse a saintly presence over the Southern Island. The great Lord Gautama appeared in the seat of man and preached the sacred law, and he preached it there because all the twenty-seven Buddhas before him had done the same, and when he preached it on that soft Indian eve, 779 772

> I know it writ that they who heard 000
> Were more—lakhs more—crores more—than could be seen,
> For all the Devas and the Dead thronged there,
> Till Heaven was emptied to the seventh zone,
> And uttermost dark He'ls opened their bars;
> Also the daylight lingered past its time
> In rose-leaf radiance on the watching peaks,
> So that it seemed Night listened in the glens
> And Noon upon the mountains; yea! they write,
> The Evening stood between them like some maid,
> Celestial, love-struck, rapt; the smooth-rolled clouds
> Her braided hair; the studded stars the pearls

000 And diamonds of her coronal; the moon
Her forehead jewel, and the deepening dark
Her woven garments. 'Twas her close-held breath
Which came in scented sighs across the lawns
While our Lord taught, and, while he taught, who heard—
Though he were stranger in the land, or slave,
High caste or low, come of the Aryan blood,
Or Mlech or Jungle-dweller, seemed to hear
What tongue his fellows talked. Nay, outside those
Who crowded by the river, great and small,
The birds and beasts and creeping things—'tis writ—
Had sense of Buddha's vast embracing love
And took the promise of his piteous speech;
So that their lives—prisoned in shape of ape,
Tiger, or deer, shagged bear, jackal, or wolf,
Foul-feeding kite, pearled dove, or peacock gemmed,
Squat toad, or speckled serpent, lizard, bat;
Yea, or of fish fanning the river-waves—
Touched meekly at the skirts of brotherhood
With man who hath less innocence than these;
And in mute gladness knew their bondage broke
Whilst Buddha spake these things before the King.

The Light of Asia.

779 775 And since that time some few have passed from our earth to Ne'ban, where the silence lives; "seeking nothing, they gained all." But far the most have failed; some have sunk to the Four States of Punishment; some have risen to the blissful seats of Nats; fewer have passed beyond to the meditative realms of Zān.

It is written that the life of man waxes from ten years to the huge period of an Athinkaya, and then wanes to ten years again. How is it, then, that some men live beyond a hundred years, and others die almost ere they have drawn breath? The reason is that some have taken no life at all in previous existences, and that others have, unwittingly perhaps, destroyed many creatures, and their own existence is correspondingly graduated. To maintain his dignity of man it is absolutely necessary that a human being must observe, as far as his powers admit, the Five great Precepts. Failure to observe these will infallibly result in a fall in the next existence into the States of Punishment.

It will be well to begin the ladder of existence at the lowest rung, at the worst of these four states. This is Nga-yè, hell—the most hideous of all. Even in Nga-yè

779
775

there are gradations: the one mighty seat is divided into eight great holds, arranged one below the other, all with punishments so terrible that none can be said to exceed any other in hideousness. The names of all the eight great chambers, from Theinzo above to Awizi the nethermost hell, are given, but a detailed catalogue is unnecessary. Each great hell is surrounded by sixteen inferior places of torture called Ôtthad-daret. From west to east the flames stream through all the mighty space and pass through on the other side to a distance of a thousand yuzanas, and from east to west the same. From north to south, from Nadir to Pole, and Pole to Nadir, it is the same, and yet the torments of this heat are but a tithe of the gruesome tortures the sinner must suffer. The life of the Déwas in Tawadeintha is reckoned at sixteen million human years. That period is but as a day and night in Kālathôt, the second hell. Thirty such days and nights make a month, twelve months one year; and the wicked in the Kālathôt hell must pass one thousand such horrible years. The Nats in Tôt-thita live five hundred and seventy-six million years, which is but as one revolving sun and moon to the tenants of Yawruwa. Of such appalling days they must make up a tale of four thousand agonising years. The miserable wretches in Awizi work out the evil of their sins only in the space of an Andrakap, a period so vast that the mind cannot grasp it. As if these punishments were not sufficient to scare the weak and ignorant from sin, it has been revealed what other tortures await the damned. In one of the Ten Great Sacred Mystery Plays it is related how a pious prince was shown the horrors of hell. The terrible pictures of the sixth book of the *Æneid*, the awful imaginings of Dante's poem, are outdone by the flesh-creeping minuteness of the Nemi Zāt. The prince saw men devoured by five-headed dogs, by famished vultures, by loathsome crows, the flesh being renewed as fast as the foul creatures tore it away; he saw others crushed beneath the weight of vast white-hot mountains, stretched on fiery bars and cut up with burning knives and flaming saws, their hearts slowly scratched and pierced with fiery needles, flame entering at the mouth and licking up the vitals, fiends all about, hacking, hewing, stabbing, [538]

779
775

lacerating the body with all that the human mind has imagined hideous, and all this, and ten times more, which it were only disgusting to write down, continued with never-abated torture to the wretched victims. The lesser hells are no less horrible; that of ordure, where huge stinging serpents and gnawing worms fasten on the sinners who are there immersed; those of burning coals, swords and knives, molten lead, fiery hammers which crush the bones at every stroke; that where the heart, lungs, and liver are torn out with hooks and slowly sliced and ever renewed. Occasionally the damned are transferred to the Lawkantyè hells, situated in the intermediate spaces between the Sekya worlds, where the tortures are those of frightful cold. Enough, however, has been said about the horrors of hell. The crimes which condemn a man, and the hell to which he is sent, are all duly recorded; but as one hell is as bad as another, it is unnecessary to recount these particulars. Suffice it to say that the man who scoffs at the Buddha and derides the law, will remain, throughout a whole revolution of nature, an entire Lawka, transfixed head downwards on a red-hot spit, in the lowest hell, hacked, gnawed, crushed, and beaten by all that is most awesome in all the flaming realms. There are twenty-one kinds of people who will fall into the lowest hell. Nineteen, however, if they see the error of their ways, and attend the pagodas with goodly offerings, may be redeemed; but the hunter and the fisherman cannot be saved. The impious Dewadat, cousin and brother-in-law of the Buddha, who tried to kill him, suffers terrible punishment. His feet are sunk ankle-deep in burning marl. His head is incased in a red-hot pan that caps it down to the lobe of the ears. Two large red-hot bars transfix him from back to front, two horizontally from right to left, and one impales him from head to foot. But since he repented when he sank into the earth to his doom, he will become a Pyitsega Buddha, under the name of Ahisara, in coming ages.

The State of Punishment above that of hell is that of the Thurakè. Their miseries are various. Some are keepers of hell by day or by night, themselves suffering all the horror of the terrible heat, assuming the form of man at other times. Others feed on their own flesh and

779
775

blood, and tear themselves with great hooks. Some are six miles high, with projecting crab's eyes, short lids, and a mouth the size of an ordinary mortal's, so that they are incessantly tormented by hunger. Above them are the Pyeitta, who in many respects resemble them in their sufferings. They wander on desert sea-shores and mountains, and in dismal forests, far from the abodes of man, naked and continually lamenting. Some have huge bodies with a mouth no larger than the eye of a needle, so that they can never satiate their craving for food. Others have huge, gluttonous mouths, always seeking to devour, but with no stomach in which the food can be received. Maggots, earth-worms, ants, and the like are often called Pyeitta, because they live on excrements and all manner of filth. This state is the one specially assigned to misers and niggardly, uncharitable people.

The highest of the Four States of Punishment is that of Tareiksan, or animals. Those who do not keep a guard over their passions, who are abusive, and who refrain from giving alms, will fall into the Bông of animals. Just as one man by reason of previous merits is born a prince, while another barely scrapes into human existence as an outcast pagoda slave, a grave-digger, a leper, or a heretic, so there are grades in the state of animals. To be an elephant is of course nearly as good as being a man; to be a white elephant is usually very much better. Any herbivorous animal is in a better state than a creature which eats flesh. Lions, tigers, and all life-destroying creatures are particularly undesirable transincorporations. The vulture is highly honoured because it never takes life, but lives entirely on carrion. Some animals are particularly esteemed as having been incarnations of the Lord Buddha. Such are the white elephant, the hare, the pigeon. Shin Gautama's first existence was in the form of a little bird, and all the stages he passed through in after existences are recorded in the Ten Great Zāts and the five hundred and ten minor tales. He who would cross the ferry to Ne'ban may learn from them how he may do so, and how miserable the toil is. Who would not seek the higher paths when he sees what the alternative is?

774
775

Raised from the Four States of Punishment to the Manôt-tha Bông, where as man the law is open to his study, the creature on his upward path should not be lightly stayed. To rise from the seat of man to that of Nats seems simple. Observe but the Five Precepts, give alms, live peaceably with all men, attend regularly at the pagodas on the appointed days that the image and model there presented to you may strengthen your resolution, do but live a respectable life, and the end is gained; you pass to the dwellings of the Dêwas, there to spend long years of bliss. Good works will do much, but it is especially necessary to observe the Five Precepts. You must keep them in your mind every day, as you put your clothes on your body. The Ten Precepts must be kept on holy days, four times in every lunar month and throughout all Lent; these, and the daily giving of alms to the mendicants, will save you; your next existence will be in the Heavens of the Nats.

The Nat-pyi Chauk-tap, the six blissful seats, the highest of the Kāma Bông, the worlds of passion, are ranged on and around Mount Myinmo. Like the eight Hells they all have names, beginning with Zatu-ma-harit and ending with Para-neimmita Wot-thawati. The second and the fourth Heavens are the best known; for to Tawadeintha the Lord Buddha ascended in three steps to preach the law to his mother, the sainted Queen Maya, and countless Byammās and Immaterials from the far realms of Rupa and Arupa came to hear; and from Tôt-thita the embryo Budh descended to take flesh as Prince Theidat. The length of life in Tawadeintha is a thousand Dêwa's years, that is, in earthly reckoning, nine millions. Similarly the four thousand of Tôt-thita are in human calendars five hundred and seventy-six million years.

Take up any book of fairy tales you have; revive your recollection of the *Arabian Nights*; recall any dream when you thought you had made your fortune, and you have a picture of the six blissful seats. A vision of song and dancing, beautiful and fragrant flowers, delicious fruits, palm-trees bearing, in place of leaves, rich garments and priceless ornaments and dainty cates, great gorgeous palaces with crystal pavements, golden columns, and jewelled walls; a

779
775

tinkling of gold and silver bells, intoxicating music—everything the most fervid imagination can picture, all are found in these happy realms. Prince Nemi was granted a sight of them as well as of the horrors of hell.

Passion still prevails, but it becomes less and less sensual the higher we rise. In Tôt-thita a touch of the hand satisfies love; in the fifth seat, lovers simply gaze on each other; and in the sixth, existence in the same place is enough. The Nat of the highest Bông is not far from the twenty superior heavens.

Passage to the Déwa seats is obtained by the strict observance of the precepts and the regular performance of good works; the step beyond can only be accomplished by the aid of the intellect. Ignorance is always the chief hindrance to rise in the scale of worlds; it is especially so in the case of the superior heavens. The twenty higher seats can only be reached by concentrated meditation; by the performance of good works, not outwardly by the body, but inwardly by the soul. The three fundamental principles of Aneiksa, Dôkka, Anatta—transience, pain, vanity—must first be intently examined. Then we must pass on through the five kinds of meditation, the highest of which is Upekka, which brings perfect fixity, whence originates callousness to pleasure or pain, scorn or affection. Thus we pass through the successive stages of contemplation which lead us through the sixteen seats of Rupa, each of which constitute the first, second, and third Zāns—Thawtapan, Thakadagam, Anagam; the tenth and eleventh seats form the fourth Zān, and in the five highest, the Yahandas have entered on Thodda, on the current of perfection.

Thus we reach to the verge of the four immaterial superior heavens. To enter these we must get rid of all affection for matter. The thirty-two parts of the body are often mentioned in prayer by pious Buddhists, each part with its forty-four subdivisions. On these we must ponder till we understand and see the worthlessness of them. Then we must repeat ten thousand times "the firmament, or the æther, is immeasurable," till at length we reach the first Seit or idea of Arupa.

Thence we progress in contempt for matter till at last

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779
775

we are delivered from the three Thangya, or false persuasions, and reaching the topmost seat of Arupa, Newa-thangya-nathangya-yatana, tremble on the verge of Ne'ban.

What is Ne'ban?

> If any teach Nirvana is to cease,
> Say unto such they lie;
> If any teach Nirvana is to live,
> Say unto such they err.

The common illustration of the schools will not suffice for matter-of-fact Western heretics. You tell them life is like a lamp, with its wick and its little lake of oil. It may be kindled and extinguished many times, fresh oil may be added, other lamps kindled from it, but at length the oil is exhausted, the flame flickers and dies away for ever. That is annihilation, you say. It is not. When a man dies and goes to Ne'ban he ceases to be individualised; he is no more agitated by existence, wretched in itself, still more wretched from the woes it reveals in others; he falls into a calm and never-ending cessation of existence; he knows nothing of others, or of the world, and so is a stranger to all feelings of joy or sorrow; he contemplates fixedly the abstract truth, which even the highest Immaterials cannot, perpetually; but he is not annihilated as the heretics assert; nor does he slip, like the dew-drop, into the shining sea; he is not absorbed into the supreme Buddha, as the Brahmins loosely say; he remains perpetually in a sacred calm, unmoved by any feeling whatever, in lifeless, timeless bliss.

The teachers strive to give a detailed explanation, but who can know? who can tell for certain the composition and economy of even the nearest star? They tell us this: Ne'ban is the extinction of Kan, the soul of recurring existences, the influence of merits and demerits, exemption from which means utter cessation from existences; Ne'ban is the stifling of Seit, the fire of passions, the entire hundred and twenty volitions and desires; Ne'ban is the cessation of Utu, exemption from revolving years, from the changes of seasons, from the variations of heat and cold, darkness and light; Ne'ban is the death of Ahāya, taste, typifying all the senses; Ne'ban is, in fact, the going out of all that we know as making up a living being; there remains behind what no

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779
775

one can name and few even picture to themselves, and those who attempt it do so according to their individual fancies. When a person recovers from a grievous illness we can only say that to be free from infirmities is to recover one's health. So we say that a man has attained to Ne'ban when he is freed from the sorrows of existences.

In regard to the Lord Buddha himself, we are told that there are in reality three stages in Ne'ban. The first was the Ne'ban of Kiletha, of the earthly passions, when under the Baw-di Bin, the sacred banyan-tree, he renounced all and became a Buddha. The second was the Ne'ban of Khanda, when near Kôkthenayôn, he expired in the grove of sāl-trees, when the five supports of existence gave way and he finally departed from the thirty-one seats of the world. The third and last, the Ne'ban of Dat, will not be for nearly two thousand five hundred years, five thousand from the day of his death. Then the duration of the Great Master's teachings will have ceased, his cycle will have lapsed, and all his relics from all parts of the world will be miraculously gathered together into the place where the original Baw-di Bin stood; there will be many wondrous signs, and then all but the memory of him will be gone, the complete Ne'ban will have been attained.

The definition may be vague, and the monks of Burma, Siam, Japan, Ceylon, Thibet, and China may each have their own definition, but there is the same difficulty to be found in all religions with regard to the last mystery. Who can find agreement in the variety of Christian descriptions of the future life, where one places happiness in the eternal singing of songs and in feastings, another in gazing on the Deity, a third, with greater modesty, hopes to creep in by the door of which St. Peter holds the keys? Buddhists have in their six heavens and twenty superior seats a choice of every kind of bliss, suited to every liking. They have the Islamite delights of sense in the heavens of Dêwas with the houri nat-daughters. Then for the various kinds of meditation and mysticism they have the contemplative Byammā seats, while the four seats of Arupa afford room for the most transcendental speculation.

Yet all these ideal realms of phantasy—the dreams of

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

● 779
775

sense, of contemplation and mystic trance—have nothing to do with the state of Ne'ban. It is not a "nothing" A "nothing" that can be imagined is an all, for according to the laws of thought, non-existence can only be understood in a relative sense. The Buddhist system is much too logical to trouble itself with such incomprehensible problems, and in order to create no false impressions, the teachers surround the last state with the utmost possible uncertainty of expression. The Buddhist yearns to return from the endless whirl and turmoil of existences to the calm of the first beginning.

792 transmigrations, forces him to leave and enter the forest of
775 the world, some from want of the gift of continence, some
from ambition and desire for worldly power, some from a
seeking after wealth, all from the predominance of some one
of the hundred and twenty seit that incapacitate a man for
● 779 the calm meditative life of the pyin-sin.

792 In the Lord Buddha's time, when a man adopted the faith, the requisites were belief in his teaching, a willingness to live in poverty and chastity, and under strict rules. All the applicant had to do was to renounce the ordinary pursuits of life, give up all his goods, take the vows, and he was forthwith a member of the Thengā. From that time forward he lived in poverty, was dependent upon alms for his food, and upon charity for a shelter for his head; he was a beikku, a mendicant, and only those who were such were Buddhists. But as the believers increased, it was evident that all could not wholly adopt the religious life. Many had faith, but not faith enough to support them in the strict rule of the society, and soon Buddhists became divided into the two classes of laymen who adopted and believed in the religious tenets, and the religious who abandoned the world entirely, and strove only to lead the higher life. Hence also arose the hierarchy of the order, which exists to a certain extent in Burma, though very far from approaching the completeness of the system of Thibet, where there is a pontifical court, an elective sacerdotal chief, and a college of superior Lamas. In this respect, however, Burman Buddhism is as much closer to the primitive order in polity as it is in exact observance of the ordinations of the Wini. Theoretically, in the sacred assembly there are but three classes:

792 The shin, the novice, who has put on the yellow robe without becoming a professed member of the order, and probably with no other desire than that of obtaining his "humanity." These are called ko-yins, maung-shins, and a variety of other names.

The u-pyin-sin, those who, having lived a certain time in the monastery, have been formally admitted to the assembly with a prescribed ceremony, whereby the title of yahan is solemnly conferred. These are the pyit-shin, or religious.

Finally, there is the pôngyi, the "Great Glory," who by

792 554 779 respect paid to him by the king was paid, not as to the head of the religion, but as to the personal teacher. The Burman in his prayers, or rather his meditations for the good of others, prays for his teacher before his parents. The five pleasant things in the world are: the shade of trees, the shade of parents, the shade of teachers, the shade of princes, the shade of the Buddha.

It is this republican tendency of Buddhism that gives it such a wonderful hold on the people. Rank does not confer on the mendicant greater honour, or release him from any of his obligations. The most learned and famous Sadaw must go forth every morning to beg his daily food. If he is very aged and decrepit he may be excused to some extent, but every now and again he must totter forth to preserve the letter of the law and show a proper example of humility. His dress is the same as that of the most recently admitted ko-yin, and in the eyes of the world he holds honour, not because he controls the affairs of the assembly, but because he is so close to the verge of Ne'ban. This feeling extends beyond the order into ordinary life. The religion brings all men down to the same level. The poor man may be a king of nats in the next life; the wealthy sinner may frizzle in the awful pains of hell. There is no difference between man and man but that which is established by superiority in virtue; [562] and hence it is that the state of women among Buddhists is so very much higher than it is among Oriental peoples, who do not hold by that faith. The Burmese woman enjoys many rights which her European sister is even now clamouring for.

792 771 We have seen that the whole male population of Burma enters the monastery, and that the great majority leave after a very short stay. Some, however, grow fond of the monastic ways, and remain to study and qualify themselves to be mendicants. In becoming pyin-sin they do not acquire any new spiritual power, nor do they constitute themselves directly teachers of the people. In a religious system, which acknowledges no supreme Deity, it is impossible for any one to intercede with a Creator whose existence is denied, in behalf of a man who can only attain to a higher state by his own pious life and earnest self-denial. The

792 [293] dozen or more solemn-visaged monks sitting on their mats and coyly hiding their faces behind these big fans is apt to raise a smile on the face of a foreigner. But there is no doubt that the regulation is well advised. Women are disturbers of tranquil meditation.

792 346 561 When these necessaries have been provided, the candidate proceeds to the appointed building. This is always a thein, a consecrated hall, built of teak, with open sides and the sacred three, five, or seven overlapping and diminishing roofs, not unlike the Albert Memorial in appearance, but much larger at the base. Here the examining body is assembled to the number of ten or twelve, ordinarily, but a minimum of four will suffice if the ceremony is conducted in the jungle. The senior is appointed upyitsi, or president, and a secretary is nominated, whose duty it is to bring forward the candidate and to read the Kammawāsā, the ritual of ●779 212 531 ordination. This is the most gorgeously ornamented of all the Burmese books. It is written, not in the ordinary round character, but in square letters painted on with a thick black resinous gum, and requires a special education to read it. The leaves are formed either of the ordinary palm-leaf, thickly covered with red lacquer, and profusely ornamented round the border and between the lines with gilded figures of nats and elaborate scroll-work, or in the case of the more sacred monasteries, of the discarded waistcloths of kings. None might wear these pasos after the Great King of Righteousness had tired of them, and many were therefore made use of for this purpose. Portions of them are taken, doubled over, and then covered with numerous coatings of wood-oil and a paste composed of this same thitsi, with finely sifted burnt rice-husks, sawdust, and rice-water, until at last they become firm as a piece of cardboard, but vastly more pliant. Then the sheets are emblazoned, and the text painted on, the whole being enclosed between richly ornamented teak boards. Few more splendid-looking manuscripts can be seen anywhere. Occasionally copies are found engrossed on thin sheets of ivory or copper, but those on the royal pasos, [195] called Wut-lè Kammawāsās, are most highly esteemed. The text is always read in a peculiar way, in a high-pitched, jerky recitative, which is not without a certain impressive effect.

792 of the fundamental precepts, and are not so ludicrous as some unbelievers would make out, except for the fact that they are set down so precisely when they might have been left to the imagination.

A monk must not build a monastery for himself without the aid of a benefactor. If his piety and talents are not such as to induce a layman to build a kyaung for him, let him patiently remain in the house into which he was
792
779 ordained. He must see that the foundations of a monastery are not laid in a place where there are many insects or worms, which would thus be killed.

For a similar reason he must not dig himself, except in a sandy place, where there can be no animal life. Neither must he spit, nor do anything of that kind on green grass, nor in fresh water, nor is he allowed to climb trees. There was a discussion in the Lord Buddha's time as to whether vegetation could be regarded as anywhere in the ladder of existence. Shin Gautama, on being asked, said it could not. Still trees and grass must not be destroyed, for they support
792 life in other creatures. A yahan may not drive in a carriage or ride a pony. He must not travel in the same boat or remain under the same roof with a woman, or even with a female animal. When he walks abroad he must neither walk fast nor dawdle and lounge about the streets. He must allow no woman to wash or clean his robes, nor eat food cooked by female hands, if he can get any other; if a woman offers rice in her hand, he may take but not eat it. He must not look into a brother's thabeit, as suggesting that he does not receive much alms. He must not eat his food to the last mouthful, and must avoid highly-seasoned dishes as tending to heat the blood.

792
554 In return for their self-denial the pyin-sin are bountifully honoured by the people, from the sovereign on the throne, who vacates his seat for the thā-thanā-baing, to the beggar in the street who prostrates himself in the dust when the yahan passes by. In the country villages all make obeisance when the mendicant passes, and the women kneel down on each side of the road. Such outward marks of respect are
[369] not usual in the larger towns, but there is no lack of veneration, and all make way for the monk when he walks abroad.

them know their ground perfectly well, and are quite able to 798
take full advantage of the strong points of their position. 795
They rely entirely on the holy books, and these they have
at their fingers' ends. It is granted by all that they are,
almost without exception, entirely free from intolerance, and
are quite unable to comprehend the zeal for conversion. A
venerable Sadaw in Bhamo came and listened attentively to
a Burmese sermon of Dr. Mason, the celebrated American
missionary. When it was over he came and complimented
him on its depth and grasp, and then suggested that the
reverend doctor should go with him to offer up worship
before the image of Buddha! The monks do not think,
with cynical mockery, that every one should be allowed to
go his own way and be blessed after his own fashion; on
the contrary, they seek zealously for new truths and explanations
of mysteries; but they hold it presumptuous and unwarrantable,
in view of the dark secrets which envelop the
life of man from its dawning to its close, to set up each his
individual opinion with dogmatic certainty as the only true
form and the only one that can save. They take their 771
standpoint on the actual state of things, on the misery and 779
sorrow which is externally bound up with the nature of the
human body as it exists. They devote themselves entirely
to preparing the spirit for its delivery, when it will finally
rest, raised above every fear of new change, in the harmonious
equipoise of Ne'ban. For this last and highest aim no
hypotheses have to be assumed. They require no personal
deity who would demand a special place in the system of
the world, and in a possible danger to the cosmic system
might incur the same risk of destruction. They remain
entirely within the clearly defined horizon of their limit of
vision, and are therefore very difficult to attack in argument.

Nevertheless schisms have arisen from time to time, and 795
exist at the present day, but they have sprung more from 779
revolt against excessive austerity, or corresponding laxity, 173
than from any real difference on doctrinal points. The Lord
Buddha had hardly died before one of the most aged of the
disciples, Subhadra, thus addressed the assembled brethren:
"Revered ones, cease to mourn. We are now happily released
from the rule of the great Sramana; we shall no

795 more be tormented with 'this is allowable' and 'that is not
● 779 allowable'; we can now do what we wish, and leave undone
173 what we do not care for." To put an end to this scandal to religion, and to fix definitely the bonds of morality, the great disciple, Kathapa, called together, forty-five years after the Buddha's death, in the year 543 B.C., the first great Council, at Rajagriha, in the country of Magadha. Kathapa himself was president. The Wini was read by Upali, whom Shin Gautama himself had pointed out as the most learned of his followers, and the Dharma by Ananda, the personal attendant and favourite disciple of the Budh. During seven months the various points in dispute were considered from all points, and after rulings had been publicly and authoritatively given, the Council broke up. Thus were the three "baskets of the Law" first settled.

But the backsliders were not corrected, and they gradually increased in number, until, one hundred years later, it was found necessary to call together another synod. There was now a considerable body of schismatics, and they formulated a demand for definite relaxations from the severity of the laws. The Council was again held in the country of Magadha (the modern Oudh), this time in the town of Wethali. The king, Kalathawka, built a splendid hall, and when all was ready, himself placed the ivory fan on the ledge of the pulpit, and sent a message to the members of the Thengā who had assembled for the conference, saying, "Lords, my task is finished." The relaxations demanded were then discussed. The most important were as follows:—
Food might be taken until the shade of the sun was two inches in length; whereas Shin Gautama had directed that for the curbing of the flesh none should be eaten after noontide.

Whey might be drunk after mid-day; forbidden as being a component part of milk, and therefore approaching animal food.

Tari, or palm toddy, might be taken, because it looks like water. This was a particularly bold demand, seeing that all fermented liquors are forbidden, and that in modern days the same plea might be urged on behalf of gin.

Gold and silver might be accepted as alms; the use of them being strictly prohibited.

A junior might lawfully copy a senior even in what is 795
wrong; whereas no example could be any valid excuse for 779
a wrong act. 173

Subsequent permission might cover an act; whereas the Wini required prior permission.

The restrictions against indulgences were to be in force only in the monasteries; and not for those who might be sojourning in villages.

These points, after lengthy discussion, were all given against the dissenters, and degradation was awarded them as a punishment.

Still matters got worse, and in 241 B.C. the great king 795
Athawka, of Pataliputra, brought about the third and last 797
great Council to cleanse the Church. After nine months' 173
public reading of the Book of Rules and of the most excellent Law, 60,000 heretics were expelled from the Church, and it was resolved to propagate the religion far and wide. This last decision was fraught with the most momentous consequences to Burma, for among the missionaries sent north, south, east, and west from Behar were the two, Thawna and Ôttara, who proceeded to the country of Suvarna Bhumi, the "Golden Land," and landing at Thatôn, now north of Maulmein, but then on the sea-coast, proceeded to disseminate the Buddhist doctrines amongst the tribes in the great river-valleys of the country. It is important to notice that the doctrines they brought with them had just been revised and confirmed by a great Council of the Church. Since then, throughout all Burma, the old geniolatry has been displaced by the teachings of the Buddha. The regulations, introduced then in their first purity, have been retained ever since practically unchanged, so that at the present time Buddhism exists in Burma in a form much nearer to that which Shin Gautama taught than is found in any country where the Three Precious Things are held in reverence.

The only sect which has at any time started any doctrinal 795
heresy is that of the Paramats. They reject the worship 175
before pagodas and images, and pray only to the Nyan-daw, the godlike wisdom, which abides like a mountain of fire in the heavens, invisible to mortal eyes, and taking no interest and exercising no influence over mundane things. These

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

795 dissenters pay reverence to the ordinary brethren of the
175 yellow robe, keep the Ten Precepts, repeat the Bawana (Payā, Tayā, Thengā, etc.) and the Ittipi-thaw, but they never go near the shrines, and recite their prayers and invocations in the jungle or in open fields. It is a kind of reminiscence of fire-worship, an ancestral adoration of the heavens in the sun, caused possibly by a shrinking from the suspicion of idolatry. A cardinal fault in them is that they give no alms, for most religions are at one on the question that charity covers a multitude of sins. The sect was founded at the beginning of this century by a pôngyi, called by his followers Shin Tabaung. He lived at Sinbyugyun, "White Elephant Island," a place half-way between Mandalay and the British frontier, and the dissent would probably never have spread beyond that district, or outlived the life of its originator, had it not been for the king Bodaw Payā. When the Thenga refused to recognise his claim to be the fifth Buddha of this world cycle, he espoused the cause of the Paramats, imposed penalties on all monks who would not accept their tenets, and went so far as to force a Thathanabaing, one of the heads of the Order, to marry, marriage being permissible under the doctrines of the dissenters. This gave the schism a prominence which it could not otherwise have attained, and enabled it to last down to the present time, though its numbers, never very great, have steadily dwindled away. There are perhaps more Paramats in Prome than in any other town of Burma, Lower
795 or Upper. Their most prominent doctrine is that the Shwe
779 Nyan-daw existed before the world began, and will exist for all eternity. Ideas may arise from the influence of exterior objects, but when they have been freed from their connection with bodily creations, they have an independent existence, and when once they have come into being continue to live. This is explained by the assertion that the quasi-deity of the Buddha is founded only on his supreme wisdom. Buddha means, etymologically, "the wise," and Shin Gautama was simply an incarnation of the pure Wisdom. Men believed they actually saw him when he was already really a deity—nothing else than the inspiring Nyan-daw, which made the five Khandas appear to have an

795 779 actual earthly existence. Occasionally an energetic Sadaw excommunicates all the Paramats under his jurisdiction, and forbids all the laity to sell to them, or have any communication whatever with them, but as a rule they are let alone. The movement is too feeble to threaten any real danger to religion, and has never gained many adherents among the laity.

795 785 It is a different matter with the rival parties of the Mahagandi and the Sulagandi. Here there are no heretical doctrines in dispute; it is simply a question of greater adherence to the strict rule of the Order. Instead of, as in the early days of the Assembly, one party crying out against the too great austerity of the majority, it is a sturdy protest of a minority within the Church against the lamentable weakness and laxity of the great body of the Order in the observance of the precepts of the Book of the Enfranchisement. The quarrel is at present limited to Lower Burma, where the greater wealth of the country and the introduction of foreign luxuries among the laity have led to corresponding indulgences in many of the monasteries, against which the Sulagandis protest and preach with feverish energy. The austere party is strongest in Maulmein, Henzada, and Pegu, and faction feeling runs so high that street fights between the scholars of the two sects are very common, and often so embittered that the English authorities have to interfere to restore peace in the town, for the laity take sides with equally bitter animosity.

The questions in dispute are entirely matters of discipline. The Puritan party, as the Sulagandi may very well be called, denounce the habit, which is becoming very frequent, of wearing silk robes. The Kammawā sets forth that the thengan should be stitched together of rags picked up in the streets or in the graveyards, and such panthagu thengans the Sulagandis wear and glory in. The Mahagandis, on the other hand, have been gradually becoming more and more luxurious. At first new cloth was torn into irregular pieces, and then sewn together. Latterly it has been considered sufficient to tear a corner and stitch it up again, or perhaps only to rip a portion of a seam, and from this to the wearing of silk garments was no very great step.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

special place wherein to pay their devotions. The Burman 778 erects a pagoda over sacred relics, and puts up an image 771 of the great Lord of Truth there, not to worship, but to afford a means to the pious of localising their feelings and concentrating their thoughts on the supreme model. The candles and smoky oil lamps, the fruits and flowers offered on the shrine, are no more signs of idolatry than the offertory bag placed on the altar by the Christian priest. The Yatana Kalapa is perfectly distinct on this point. Under the heading U'bhato Kotito Panha we find it written: "It is bootless to worship the Buddha; nothing is necessary but to revere him and the memory of him. Statues are only useful in so far as they refresh the memory; for as the farmer sows the seed and gathers in the grain in due season, so will the man who trusts in the Buddha and holds fast by his sacred Law obtain the deliverance and pass into Ne'ban. The earth and the Buddha are alike in themselves inert."

There is thus no doubt left as to what the great master and his interpreters intended. The worship of the payā is nothing more than a simulation of the devotion which would be paid to Shin Gautama were he still upon earth. The Buddha is admired, he is lauded, he is tenderly loved; and this devotion is extended to the figures which are erected in remembrance of him, in recognition of his blameless life, the supreme wisdom which enabled him to teach the Law, and the great compassion and benevolence with which he regarded all living things. The characteristics of a Budh are the 779 exercise of the Three Great Works of Perfection, the constant practising of the Ten Great Virtues, and the Five Renouncings; and to attain the deliverance, all must diligently strive to observe these. The Three Great Works of Perfection are:—

1. Assistance afforded to parents and relations.

2. Great offerings made in this and previous existences, coupled with strict observance of the enactments of the Law.

3. Benevolent dispositions towards all sentient beings indiscriminately.

The Ten Great Virtues are:—liberality; observance of the precepts of the Law; retreat into lonely places; diligence;

779 patience; fortitude; wisdom; benevolence; truthfulness; indifference.

The Five Renouncings are the giving up, for holiness' sake, of—children; wife; goods; life; one's self.

775 This cannot all be effected in one existence, unless piety has been exhibited in many previous lives. Much depends on one's kan, the accumulation of merits from past time. Just as the fruits on a tree are some of them good, some bad, but have little or nothing in common with each other, or with those that went before, or may come after, so it is with a man's kan. But the diligent observance of the holy precepts, and especially the exercise of open-handed charity, will always tend to reduce the number of lives to be endured before the deliverance comes.

782 Prayer there is none in the technical sense of the word,
788 and the doxologies repeated at the shrines are mostly those learnt in childhood at the monastery school, or special compositions of each individual for himself. There is nothing laid down in any of the Buddhist religious books concerning the formulæ of prayer. Whatever there is, is taken from the Apyin Aung-gyin, the record of the triumph of Shin Gautama over the outer foes, Mān-nat, the spirit of evil, and his daughters, and the Atwin Aung-gyin, the triumph over the inward foes, the kiletha, the passions of mankind. Many, however, repeat little more than the tharana-gōng, the form with which the pôngyis almost invariably commence worship: "I worship the Buddha; I worship the Law; I worship the Assembly." This, with the aneiksa, dôkha, anatta, "change, pain, illusion," forms the sentence to be repeated on the rosary. A very usual form of doxology commonly taught to the scholars of the kyaungs, and therefore retained through life, is the following:—"Awgatha, Awgatha, I worship with the body, with the mouth, and with the mind, with these three kans. The first, the second, the third; once, twice, until three times. The Lord, the precious one; the Law, the precious one; the Assembly, the precious one; these three precious things. I, the worshipper, most humbly, with fervid zeal, with clasped hands, pay reverence, give offerings, and with pious gaze bow me down. Thus by this worshipping I gain merit and

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

The sole distinction between Lent—lasting from the 776 day after the full moon of July to the full moon of October—and the rest of the year, is that all laymen are expected to be much more regular in their observance of the weekly religious days. It is not a season of fasting, but simply of stricter execution of religious duties. No marriages, feasts, or public amusements are held, or only by the graceless; and some of the yahans retire into the depths of the jungle, where they can devote themselves to meditation with greater security from interruption. The custom of regarding these three months as peculiarly sacred undoubtedly rose from the habit of the monks, in the first days after the Buddha's teaching, remaining steadfastly in their monasteries in Magadha during the period of the annual rains, devoting all their time to pondering over the Sacred Law, and expounding it to any laymen dayakas, or upathakas, inquirers, or believers and searchers after the truth, who came to consult with them in their dwellings; seeking to enter the current of perfection, and, attaining the state of arahan, to float into Ne'ban, the state of joyless, painless calm. Nowadays all are expected to study the Law for themselves; but in order to prepare themselves worthily for the Wā, the wealthier people often call in the more learned yahans to deliver exhortations in their houses. Numbers of relations and friends are invited, who bring presents for the holy man, in the hope of sharing the merit of the transaction. Portions of the holy books usually 779 are read on these occasions, especially the much-admired Wethandaya Wuttu. The doctrine inculcated by this zāt is charity; and malicious people do not hesitate to say that the giving of alms is the invariable theme of the pyinsin. But I have at least as often heard the praises of wisdom from the Lawkanidi recited at such Lenten lectures, and a portion may be quoted here: "The ignorant bow down before the wise man. The riches of the wise man are like a bubbling spring, a fountain that never runs dry, and that, however constantly you may draw from it, is ever filled anew. The beauty of women and the sweetness of the sugar-cane bring satiety, but the words of wisdom never pall. The lazy man will never get learning. Any man may be endowed with riches, beauty, rank, youth; but without

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

● 779

knowledge he is but as a beautiful flower that hath no perfume. The fragrance of flowers is refreshing; more so is the light of the cool moon's rays; but the greatest delight comes from the words of wisdom. The sun may rise in the west; the summit of Mount Meru may be bent like a bow; the fires of hell may languish and die out; the lotus may spring on the tops of the mountains; but the words of truth and wisdom are always the same."

Similarly the riches of man are said to consist in his learning, his family, and his good name; of a woman in her beauty; of a great man in his rank, influence, position, and the number of his slaves; of a monk in his austerity; of a serpent in its poison; and of a pônna in his oaths and his prophecies.

Thirteen kinds of pride are enumerated. To lie in the cool shade, with the power of the heavens at his command, and to be victorious over his enemies, is the pride of the tha-gya king. The galôn delights in flying throughout the skies above or below. The naga prides himself in his wondrous works, bright and glorious. The lion's pride is to overcome his enemies and destroy all opposition. The merchant's pride is to have obedient slaves and abundance of gold and silver. The soldier's to enter a town with the clash of the cymbal and the pomp of military music. The peasant's to finish his toil honestly and well. The yahanda finds his pride in the power of wisdom and in books. The prince in triumphing over routed enemies and enriching himself with their spoil. A woman's pride is to talk in a pleasant and amusing way. A man's to be celebrated and feared for his strength of mind and body. A doctor's to effect successful cures with his own medicines, and a pônna's pride is in his wisdom and knowledge of the Bedin.

The significance of all this and a deal more similar useless information is that during the Wā the sacred books should be studied, while all youths should receive their Buddhist baptism by putting on the wā, the yellow robe of the cloister—a Burmese play upon words which has a further significance to the young neophytes, in the reflection that "wā" also means a bamboo, which yahans do not spare, Lent or no Lent.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma(Hill Peoples)AP1
Burmese AP4

Be 776

question may be philologically interesting, but is not likely to be definitely settled till the languages of "Farther India" are better known. What concerns us is the fact that "nat" means in Burmese two distinct kinds of individuals. It may be applied to the inhabitants of the six inferior heavens, properly called déwas, who figure in Hindu mythology, and have thence been transferred to the Buddhist world system. Kings and virtuous people are rewarded with happiness in these six seats after a good life upon earth. The Tha-gya min, the king of the nats, or déwas, comes down to earth at the beginning of the Burman year, and remains here for three days, and his subjects generally display great solicitude for the pious state and welfare of mankind, but otherwise they are matters of no concern to dwellers in the lupyi unless as objects of envy. Perfectly distinct from these are the nats of the house, the air, the water, the forest,—the spirits of nature, fairies, elves, gnomes, kelpies, kobolds, pixies, whatever other names they have received in other countries. Burmans never have any confusion in their mind on the subject, such as may occasionally occur to a foreigner. The genii and peris of Eastern story, though doubtless springing from the Hindu déwas, have no real analogy in Burmese literature, any more than the idea of the *devil*—etymologically connected with the word dév-a or déwa—has anything to do with the joys of Tawadeintha and Tôtthita, the best-known heavens of nats of the superior order.

Be 776 779

The worship of nats, of the spirits, then, has nothing to do with Buddhism, and is denounced by all the more earnest of the pyin-sin as being heretical and antagonistic to the teachings of the Lord Buddha. King Mindôn, who was a true defender of the faith, and possessed of a deeper knowledge of the Pali texts than many of the members of the Assembly of the Perfect, fulminated an edict against the reverence paid to the nats, and ordered its discontinuance under severe penalties, but the worship was never really stopped, and can no more be stopped than refusing to dine thirteen at table, to walk under ladders, to cross knives, or to refrain from throwing spilt salt on other people's carpets.

3a 783 776

The term spirit-*worship* hardly conveys a proper notion. Even the Karens and Kachins, who have no other form of

CHAPTER XXVI

SILK-GROWING

REARING silkworms, though a very profitable occupation, is 231
not looked upon with any favour in Burma. To get the silk 779 ●
the pupa must be killed; and the taking of life in any form 554
is an impiety always looked upon with great horror by all 563
good Buddhists. Silk-growers are classed together with
professional hunters and fishermen. The Four States of
Punishment yawn for them, and their portion will be in the
lowest abyss of the lowest hell. Still there are colonies of
silk-growers in various parts of the country; but they live
apart from the rest of the inhabitants as a rule, and often
have entire villages to themselves. Colonel Horace Browne
who, more than any other Englishman took an interest in
the ways and occupations of the districts under his charge,
states that the cultivators near Prome, where more silk is
produced than in any part of Burma, are nearly all Yabeins
—a race of the same stock as the Burmese, but despised by
them independently of their crime in the way of habitually
taking animal life. So much has the cultivation of silk
become identified with them, that to Burman ears the term
Yabein is virtually synonymous with that of silk-grower. 563
They usually live on the hillsides, occupying themselves like 241
the poorer Burmans and Karens, with taung-ya cultivation; 133
burning the forests on the slopes and sowing the ground thus
enriched with the wood ashes, with rice, cotton, or oil-seed.
The system is viewed with very little approval by the government
officials, for the taung-ya soil, hardly exhausted by the
single crop raised off it, immediately produces a dense shrubgrowth
of no use to anybody, certainly not to the foresters.

demand. The indignation which a crusade against the condiment by a young civil officer with more zeal than discretion caused in 1880, will not soon be forgotten. Cholera was rather bad in Yandun, one of the great places for ngapi, and the Assistant Commissioner, convinced that the heavy smells must be the cause of it, issued an order forbidding the manufacture of the fish-paste, or its sale in the public markets, as well as that other cherished but strong-smelling dainty, prawn-head oil. The result was an avalanche of petitions to the Chief Commissioner, and something [illegible]y like open riot in the town. Equanimity was not restored till the too energetic official was removed to another station, and the lugyis pointed exultantly to the fact that as soon as they began to make up arrears in the way of ngapi consumption, cholera left the place. Nevertheless, Yandun is not a charming place of residence to a man with a sensitive nose. 263 438

Fishermen are promised terrible punishments in a future life for the number of lives they take, but popular sympathy finds a loophole of escape for them. They do not actually kill the fish. These are merely put out on the bank to dry, after their long soaking in the river, and if they are foolish and ill-judged enough to die while undergoing the process, it is their own fault. Nevertheless, some strict people hold by the doctrine of the Manichæans, who asserted that the soul of the farmer migrated into herbs so that it might be cut down and thrashed out. The baker becomes bread and is eaten. The killer of a deer becomes a deer; of a fish, a fish; and so on. But nevertheless, if all the fishermen became monks one day, the next would see some of the pious trying their hands with the cast-net. 226 779 ●

CHAPTER XXXIII

A SÔNDAWGYI FEAST

773
● 779

It is written that in the solitude of Uruwela a woman named Thuzata vowed an offering to the spirit of the place if she should have a male child. The prayer was granted, and the offering prepared. A thousand cows, new-calved, were milked; five hundred more were fed with this milk, and then with theirs two hundred and fifty more, and so on until the six noblest and best of all her herds produced a milk of surprising flavour and richness. This was boiled with sandal and fine spice in silver vessels, and fine ground rice, from chosen seed, set in new-broken ground, was added. Wonderful signs attended the preparation of the offering. A tha-gyā brought fuel to the fire; the great Brahma held an umbrella over the silver lota; four kings of nats sat by and watched; while subject spirits infused rich honey into the nogana. When it was ready Thuzata sent a servant to clear a place under a tree in the grove that she might make her offering to the wood-spirit. Sunama, the servant, found Shin Gautama sitting under the bawdi-tree. It was the day on which he attained the ne'ban of the passions, on which he became the Lord Buddha, and his face shone with a splendour beyond that of nats. Sunama returned and told her mistress that the spirit of the grove had appeared in person to receive the offering. Thuzata poured the nogana into a golden cup, worth a hundred thousand pieces of silver, such a cup as is always presented to the payalaung on the day wherein he becomes Buddha. Then she went to the grove, and prostrating herself humbly, made her offering, turned on the right, and retired. The Lord Buddha bathed in the river Neritzara, at a place where more than 100,000 Buddhas had bathed, before obtaining the supreme intelligence. Then he divided the nogana into forty-nine mouthfuls, ate it, and mounted the throne, whereon he sat for forty-nine days tasting no food, and combating Mān Nat, the spirit of death and sin. But ere he lapsed into meditation he threw his golden bowl into the river. It ascended the stream swiftly, floated steadily for a short time, and then sank in a whirlpool far down, leagues beyond the earth into the country of the nagās, where it fell against the golden bowls of the three previous Budhs with a clang that resounded throughout the four worlds, and all things worshipped the present Lord: 773 779 ●

> King and high Conqueror! thine hour is come.
> This is the night the ages waited for.

This event in the life of Shin Gautama is commemorated in the Sôndawgyi pwè. Sōnthi is a sacred word set apart to denote the eating of members of the Holy Assembly, and, in remembrance of Thuzata's historic offering, the mendicants are feasted annually by the pious, with a splendour and profusion far exceeding the ordinary alms poured daily with unstinting hand into the begging-bowl. The date of the feast does not exactly correspond with the original event. According to the chronicle, the Lord Buddha attained the first state of ne'ban in the month of Kasôn, about April, whereas the feast of Tawadeintha, with which the Sôndawgyi is always immediately connected, is celebrated after Lent, at the full moon of Ta'saung-môn in November. The festival is essentially one of the town rather than of the country. Except the New Year's Feast, none of the religious celebrations can be really called universal, and the Sôndawgyi perhaps least of all. Villages and small country towns cannot get together the splendour necessary to distinguish the occasion from the ordinary domestic feasts, or even from the daily almsgiving to the mendicants. It is therefore in a large town like Rangoon, where there is a rtain amount of money, and a facility for acquiring or rrowing ornaments and frippery, that the festivities are best seen. There the *fête*—the word is more appropriate 796 796 369 [184] 527

CHAPTER XXXIV

A WORK OF MERIT

577 "THE wisdom that made Asia mild" laid down no command which is better observed in Burma than the first of the Five Rules: Thu a-thet go ma that hnit (Thou shalt not take any life at all). Hardened convicts will not harm the vermin that infest their mattresses. A story is told of a man who allowed the snake that had killed his father to wriggle away unmolested through the tall elephant grass. I myself have seen a Burmese mother take up between two bits of bamboo the scorpion that had stung her little son, and simply throw the hideous creature out of the house. So far does the command to beware how they harm any meanest thing in its upward path lead earnest Buddhists. Mr. Edwin Arnold tells how, in a distant age, the great Lord Buddha offered up himself to preserve "this breath of fleeting life" in an animal:

> Drought withered all the land; the young rice died
> Ere it could hide a quail.

779 When between the hot walls of a nullah, our Lord spied, as he passed, a starving tigress, with two little cubs whining for the nourishment her shrunken frame could not give them. Then, heeding nought but the immense compassion of a Budh, the great yahan bethought himself:

"Lo! if I feed her, who shall lose but I?" and, throwing off his priestly robes, came forth with a "Ho! mother, here is meat for thee!" and died.

"So large the Master's heart was long ago," before he came upon earth for the last time to teach the Law and give

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

● 779

the millions peace; not only when he came down from the hills, where in austere fastings he had been pondering to win the secret of "that curse which makes sweet love our anguish," and appeared before King Bimbasara to plead for the flocks that the white-robed Brahmin priests destined for sacrifice on the altar. The idea has always been a favourite one with Buddhists. A favourite myth is that of the hare. Kalpas since the Lord of ruth appeared on earth in the form of that animal. All creatures were making offerings to the Buddha who was then engaged in preaching the sacred Law. The hare bethought himself that he too must give some alms. But what had he to give? Man might bring costly gifts; the lion found it easy to offer the tender flesh of the fawn; birds of prey brought dainty morsels; fish could produce no less tasty signs of devotion; even the ant was able to drag along grains of sugar and aromatic leaves; but the hare, what had he? He might gather the most tender succulent shoots from the sunny forest glades, but they were useless even to form a couch for the teacher. There was nothing but his own body, and that he freely offered. The Supreme Lord declined the sacrifice, but in remembrance of the pious intention, placed the figure of the hare in the moon, and there it remains as a symbol of the queen of night to the present day.

Similarly just a little below Mandalay on the river, near the Ava road, there is a huge, castellated pagoda, the Shwe Gyet-yet, raised in commemoration of another performance of the Budh, in an avatar countless ages ago. The tale is that in a season of grievous dearth, when all flesh was dying of famine, the great Master, then in the shape of a jungle-fowl, spied a holy pilgrim in the last extremity of want. There was none to pity him, none to save him from death, and the Budh, conquering, even in that distant time, one of the latest lost of the ten deadly sins—the love of life—surrendered himself to save another. Hence the pagoda standing out boldly on a great rock over the river. To the east is a representation of a fowl in stone, recalling the event; and before this, daily by the pagoda slaves and others, and on feast-days by hundreds of worshippers, plentiful heaps of gilded grains are strewn.

These personal examples furnished by the teacher of 779 ●
neh'ban and the Law himself have only served to emphasise what is seen on the admission of every new member to the holy assembly. One of the articles with which, in addition to his dress and begging-bowl, every postulant must provide himself, is a strainer, without using which he must drink no water. The object is, of course, to prevent him from destroying life in the shape of the small animalcula to be found in water. Some zealous and scientific proselytiser endeavoured, by the use of microscopes, to persuade the people that this was of no avail, seeing that even in the strained water there was abundance of animal life; but a council decided that, provided the water had been filtered, if the ascetic could detect nothing living with his unaided eyes he was at liberty to drink the water without incurring blood-guiltiness. The attacks of science on Buddhism failed as completely as the efforts of most missionaries.

The mingled pity and dislike with which professional 577
hunters and fishermen, whose occupation implies the regular 244
taking of life, are viewed by Buddhists, is well known, and 554
makes itself evident in the fact that the villains in most plays are hunters. Fishermen are perhaps not so much decried—possibly on account of the plea brought forward on their behalf, that the fish die of themselves, being taken out of the water, and not through any direct action of their captors. It is in connection with fish, however, that one of the most curious national works of merit takes place annually—furnishing, like all Burmese festivals, occasion for much fun and frolic.

The violence of the rain during the five or six months 577
of the south-west monsoon floods the country. Not only do 132
the rivers, which in many places rise regularly as much as thirty or forty feet above their hot-weather level—not only do they overflow their banks, and make wide seas of the neighbouring flat lands, but great lakes spring up everywhere. These are gradually stocked with fish of all kinds, most of which, by the sudden fall of the water, are cut off from all chance of retreat to the large rivers, where alone there is safety. Steadily the water goes down, the hot sun sucks up the pools, till at last the end seems to be come. The river

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER LII

THE LORD WHITE ELEPHANT

THE importance attached to the possession of a white elephant is traceable to the Buddhist system. The form in which Gautama Buddha entered the womb of Queen Maya to be born upon earth for the last time to "teach the Law and give the millions peace" was that of a white elephant. The Saddan, or celestial elephant, was an avatar of his many existences previously. The Saddan is gifted with special endowments, and is one of the seven precious things the possession of which marks the Sekyawadé, the Mahā Chakra Vartti Raja, "the great wheel-turning king," the holy and universal sovereign—a ruler who appears in once a cycle, at the time when the waxing and waning term of human life has reached its maximum of an athinkaya (a huge period represented by a unit and 164 cyphers) in duration. Thus the possession of an undoubted white elephant stands as a sign and symbol of universal sovereignty; and every Burmese king longed for the capture of such a treasure during his reign as a token that his legitimate royalty is recognised by the unseen powers. The great river of Burma, the Irrawaddy, is named from Airawata, the elephant of Indra, a sufficient assertion of the proper dwelling-place of all his successors. Hence the reverence of the Hindoos for the animal, and their not infrequent pilgrimages to Mandalay to see the royal creature and have a dursun, or interview of worship, with him. 773 825 779

All the elephants in the country, whether wild or tame, belonged to the king: whoever captured one had to give him up to the king, and he granted permission to the princes and to a few of the higher dignitaries to use them. The 825 643 554

CHAPTER LV

JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

BUDDHIST law as it was administered in Upper Burma 671
dates from the beginning of the now existing world. The 673
first crime was theft; the first punishment was a scolding, 681
speedily followed by a thrashing; and the first judge was
Mahā Thamada, elected by vote of the people to be ruler
over them. No doubt there were written laws then, but
they have not come down to us. The written code in use
was given to the world by Manu, originally a cow-herd,
but afterwards a minister. He found them written in large
characters on the walls of another world, to which he was
transported when in an ecstasy. These laws formed the first
code. There have been since compiled from them eight
other codes in the kingdom of Prome and other ancient
states in Burmah. The last, called Mahā Manu Thaya
Shwe Myin, was drawn up on the foundation of the sixth
kingdom of Ava, in the year 1137 B.E. (1775 A.D.), by
Minhkaung Gyi, who, with the aid of a learned monk,
went through and carefully revised all the codes. These
laws in their integrity are those which governed Upper
Burma and now govern the whole of Burma in so far as they
regulate social relations. The codes were written in Sanskrit 671
and Magadha, a language usually called Pali through 779 ●
an error. The name Pali signifies really not a *language*,
but "The Canon," handed down to Buddhists, as composed
by pious disciples from the teachings of Shin
Gautama. The Magadha or Pali code accepted is called
Manu Wunnana, from its writer and compiler, a minister of
state in Ava. It is looked upon as a commentary on, or
a key to, the codes, and contains the whole of the laws.

539 ichneumon, from which you may learn, that although man is superior to all animals, yet kindness shown to them will always meet with its reward.

539 ● 779 876 The following sermon of the Lord Buddha is the chief favourite with the Burmese. In its present form it is said to have been handed down by the favourite disciple, Ananda, who heard it from the lips of Shin Gautama himself. The Mingala-thut is one of the first books the young scholar gets into his hands after he has learnt the ordinary formulæ of worship. There are few Burmans, even in these later days, who cannot repeat the Pali text from end to end.

Mingala-thut, the Buddhist Beatitudes, or Chapter of Blessings

539 Praise be to Buddha the holy, the all-wise.

When the adorable and most excellent Buddha dwelt in the great monastery of Zetawun, built by the rich man Anātabein, in the country of Thawatti, there came to him a déwa at the hour of midnight, when the whole building was illuminated by the effulgence which streamed from his body. The déwa placed himself neither too far nor too near, neither to the right nor to the left, but in the proper spot, and after bowing low in humble obeisance, thus addressed the Buddha:

"Most adorable and excellent Buddha, during twelve long years, many déwas and men, desirous of reaching to the holiness of Ne'ban, have striven to discover what things are blessed, but they still remain in ignorance. Do thou therefore instruct us in those matters which are most blessed."

The Adorable replied:—

"Thou son of déwas, to shun the company of the foolish; to pay homage to the learned; to worship what ought to be worshipped; these are blessed things. Déwa, mark them well.

"Thou son of déwas, to dwell among good men; to have with one's self the conciousness of good deeds done in a former state of existence; to guard well all one's

823 occasionally want to shift shoulders. When they do so an earthquake is the result. Others declare that the quaking of the earth is caused by gusts of wind on the under surface of the world. The idea is that the solid mass of the earth is supported on a double thickness of water, and this again by twice its thickness of air, below which is a vacuum, occasionally, however, disturbed by storms. The Buddha gave a much more extensive explanation to his favourite disciple Ananda. "My son," he said, "eight causes make the earth tremble. First, the earth lies on a mass of water, which rests on the air, and the air on space; when the air is set in motion, it shakes the water, which in its turn shakes the earth; second, any being gifted with extraordinary powers; third, the conception of a payā laung for his last existence; fourth, his birth; fifth, his becoming a Buddha; sixth, his preaching the Law of the Wheel; seventh, his mastering and renouncing existence; eighth, his obtaining the state of Ne'ban. These are the eight causes of earthquakes."

● 777 The Law of the Wheel is the doctrine of the four great truths: pain, the production of pain, the destruction of pain, and the way leading to that destruction. These constantly revolve upon themselves, and the manifestation of these truths is the great work a Buddha has to perform.

787 Omens are drawn from the appearance of the sun and moon, and especially from the particular constellation which presides over one's birth. The howling of dogs, the flight and song of birds, the appearance of any strange creature, or of a wild animal in an unexpected place, all have their special meaning. So have the nervous twitchings of the eye, or of any part of the body. If the sun or any of the planets approaches the moon there is danger about. In the four months when Venus is not to be seen, in a month when there is an earthquake or an eclipse, and on the first or last day of a month, it is advisable not to cut one's hair, marry, build a house, or begin any important business whatever. These and hundreds more may be found in the Deitton, a book very full of singular information. Palmistry is a science of which every educated person professes to have more or less knowledge. The less a man knows, the more truculent his deductions are.

13: Khin Zaw I-5 (no date) 1940 API Burma
Burmese AP4

BURMESE MUSIC.

As for the classical cycle of keys, diagrams of which appeared both in ~~U~~ Ba Choe's article and U San Win's book 2, both U Ba Choe and U San Win quote authoritative verses from classical literature (*Natakaratanakosa* နာဋကရတနာကောသကျမ်း) but regret that not all the keys mentioned are in use in this decadent age. With due reverence for the classics I shall assign these verses like Ruskin's works on art and Pater's, to literature. It is becoming increasingly difficult to fit ~~classical~~ theory with the actual music. Whereas our classical literature came *en masse* from ancient India along with Buddhism many hundred years ago our music seems to have come from the east. Indeed one class of songs *yodaya* ယိုးဒယား came *en masse* from Siam less than two centuries ago. Music is the last thing that could have come with Buddhism. It seems to have developed quite independently of classical literature. In fact Burmese poetry *linga* လင်္ကာ *alankara*) is quite distinct from Burmese song (*thachin* သချင်း) and from both stands massive and remote the Buddhist literature of the *tripitaka* in the Pali language.

533
178
101
[779] ●
[538]

What seems to have happened is that while the elegant royalty and courtesans in the palace were delighting in the intricacies of Burmese versification with liberal infusion of both the Pali language and the Buddhist philosophy, music in its robust form was having its origins in animistic ritual (နတ်ပွဲ), in the village when somebody was giving alms and in the paddy-fields when the transplanting of the seedlings were in progress. For the former we have *Byaw*[1] (ဗျော) stick-struck drum songs, and for the latter we have *Bonshay* (ဗုံရှည်) long-drum or *kauksaik* (ကောက်စိုက်) transplanting songs. *Kyoh* (ကြိုး) that most ancient class of Burmese songs also must have been in the beginning a labour chant for concerted action that germinated in ancient row boats, grew into a boat-song, and then developed for royal ears into its present high order of melodic and literary grandeur (*vide* the royal barge songs : ဖောင်ဆိုက်ကြိုး when the barge makes port, ဖောင်ငင်ကြိုး when the barge is being towed out by rowers in open boats, ဖောင်ထားကြိုး when the barge is underway [2]. The cadences of these still recall the rhythmic flash of wet oars in the sun. Thus Burmese music had as its sponsor the rustic festivals and the occupation of the hewers of wood and drawers of water, and not the Church as

533
178

---

[1] ကချေသည်ဘဝငှက်ပျောပွဲနှင့်ဗျောသံက 'A dancer's life (or dancing) begins with a tray of banana offerings (or *pwé* marked by a central fire-bowl stand of plantain trunk) in a *byaw* music party. Till 1698 A. D. when the 8th king of the Nyaungyan dynasty စနေမင်း *Sané Min* came to the throne there existed only intoned poems ပျို့ ဧချင်း but no real Burmese music. [illegible] by U Nu. Sun Magazine, 1938.

[2] U Ba Choe told me that this was not true. This class of songs used to be played as exercises in the playing of the Burmese harp, when the pupil first learnt to pluck simultaneously certain strings (ကြိုး *Kyoh*). For a full explanation of it see [illegible] by U San Win.

13: Khin Zaw I-5 (no date) 1940 API Burma
Burmese AP4

533 178 [779] in Europe. Indeed the Buddhist religion so frowns upon music that it was practised rather shamefacedly and its devotees are often called *Phet-khwet-sā* (Eaters out of leaves), *i.e.* vagabonds. Even so recently as last year a learned old Burmese gentleman loth to depart this life without imparting all of his Burmese learning concluded a series of Burmese articles on Burmese music and dancing with an apology for having at all indulged in such frivolities.

533 181 178 565 177 Music found in the irrepressible gaiety of the Burmese people a fertile soil and it let its roots deep into the soil, and soon from occupational songs music developed into an art-form which finally invaded the towns, the capital and the royal palace. There it received fresh impetus from a system of competitive patronage in which the king himself joined with his own band. There also, apparently it received its classical nomenclature. Names which sound imposing enough—သရ မုစ္ဆနာ ဂါမ သုတိ etc. *Svara*, *Mūrchana*, *Grāma*, *Çruti* etc.—but meant for quite different things, must have been borrowed in their entirety for the sake of their classical origin, so that the names were not in accordance with what they stood for, even as the Greek names, by which the western ecclesiastical modes were distinguished, were not in accordance with those of the ancient Greek octave system from which the names were taken. Thus it seems Burmese musical theory in the classical manner is a grafted dignity which dignifies but does not apply. Indeed it seems yet to be written.

533 However, to go on with Mariano: "Pure Burmese melodies are beautiful in themselves. But on account of the preponderance of grace-notes (mordente, acciaccatura, appoggiatura) Europeans find it difficult to catch Burmese tunes.". This is very true, but not true enough. Ornament in Burmese music does something more than preponderate. They themselves are an inherent part of the tunes. That is why when a Burmese song is taken down by a western musican and reproduced, the ornaments having been unappreciated and eschewed the 'tune' that remains no longer sounds Burmese. Fox Strangways explains succinctly:

> "We think of grace-notes as something which may but need not be added to the note, not as something actually inherent in it. If cultivated for their own sake or used at all in excess they are regarded by us as meretricious......Indian 'grace' is different in kind. There never is the least suggestion of anything having been 'added' to the note which is graced. The note with the grace makes one utterance. The object of grace is, of course, to add importance to the particular note, but there are such varying degrees in which this may be done

IV

RELIGION

The people of Tadagale are overwhelmingly Theravada Buddhist in faith. 779
The exceptions are the Indian minority, who are largely Hindus. There are 563
three Indians who profess Mohammedanism, and three Indo-Burmans and one
Pakistani of like faith. Being Burmese and Buddhist are almost identified in
the thinking of the majority, as evidenced by the fact that almost all replied
'Burmese Buddhist' to the question, 'To what people do you consider yourself
to belong?'

In discussing the religious life of Tadagale, realism calls for emphasis upon actual religious beliefs and behavior, rather than any extended setting down of the formal theology of Buddhism. The latter has been done in any number of specialized works, to which the interested reader may refer. Here we shall refer to Buddhist precepts insofar as is necessary to illuminate religious beliefs and practices of the villagers.

The Five Precepts or Commandments. Almost all villagers know well the 779
fundamental Buddhist injunctions against the taking of life in any form, the
consumption of alcohol, illicit sexual activity, theft, and prevarication. 577
These moral rules are, of course, sometimes breached. In Tadagale, the use
of alcohol, sometimes to excess, is perhaps the most notable instance. The
'good Buddhist' does not, however, seem to experience feelings of guilt or
pangs of conscience in such matters. Rather, the following of the moral precepts
has instrumental value for him, in relation to his accumulation of merit and his
reincarnation after death.

Merit. One's behavior throughout life determines one's store of merit, 779
and this, in turn, determines one's reincarnation after death. Morally proper
behavior, such as the following of the five basic commandments of Buddhist
faith, is regarded as contributing to one's store of merit and thus enhancing 775
one's state of reincarnation after death. Religious acts, such as making
daily offerings of food to the monks, saying prayers, and attending the pagoda
festivals on the important sacred days are likewise considered to increase
one's merit. Breaking the moral precepts, irreligiousity, acting selfish or
quarrelsome, detract from merit and accordingly tend to lower one's state in
reincarnation.

Such is about the extent of the average villager's lay conception and 775
understanding of the moral code and the ideas of the afterlife in Buddhism.
He has little or no knowledge of the detailed concepts of reincarnation, with 779
its elaborate gradationary ladder leading from the four states of punishment
up to the ultimate achievement of Nirvana. Such theological learning is the 184
property of the monkhood and of a few laymen who spent more than the usual
few years as pupils in the monastic school.

Functions of the Monks. The functions of the Buddhist monks in the 793
village may be conveniently classified as three-fold: formal education;
officiation at certain rites; and providing personal advice and guidance to
individuals.

With respect to formal education, the monks of four monasteries close 792
to the village conduct schools which are attended by a considerable number of 871

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

acts of theirs and customs, which I had seen and 114
noted, but of which I did not know the reason. We all know how hard it is to see into the heart even of our own people, those of our flesh and blood who are with us always, and whose ways are our ways, and whose thoughts are akin to ours. And if this be so with them, it is ten thousand times harder with those whose ways are not our ways, and from whose thoughts we must be far
apart. It is true that there are no dark places in [181]
the lives of the Burmese as there are in the lives of other Orientals. All is open to the light of day in their homes and in their religion, and their women are the freest in the world. Yet the barriers of a strange tongue and a strange religion, and of ways caused by another climate than ours, is so great that, even to those of us who have every wish and every opportunity to understand, it seems sometimes as if we should never know their hearts. It seems as if we should never learn more of them than just the outside—that curiously varied outside which is so deceptive, and which is so apt to prevent our understanding that they are men just as we are and not strange creations from some far-away planet.

So when I settled down and sought to know 114
more of the meaning of what I had seen, I thought 121
that first of all I must learn somewhat of their 777
religion, of that mainspring of many actions, which seemed sometimes admirable, sometimes the reverse, and nearly always foreign to my ideas. It is true that I knew they were Buddhists, that I recognised the yellow-robed monks as followers of the word of Gaudama the Buddha, and that I had a general

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 18[illegible] AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

114 acquaintance with the theory of their faith as picked 121 up from a book or two—notably, Rhys Davids' ●779 'Buddhism' and Bishop Bigandet's book—and from many inconsequent talks with the monks and others. But the knowledge was but superficial, and I was painfully aware that it did not explain much that I had seen and that I saw every day.

So I sent for more books, such books as had been published in English, and I studied them, and hoped thereby to attain the explanations I wanted; and as I studied, I watched as I could the doings of the people, that I might see the effects of 775 causes and the results of beliefs. I read in these sacred books of the mystery of Dharma, of how 779 a man has no soul, no consciousness after death; that to the Buddhist 'dead men rise up never,' and that those who go down to the grave are known no more. I read that all that survives is the effect of a man's actions, the evil effect, for good is merely negative, and that this is what causes pain and trouble to the next life. Everything changes, say the sacred books, nothing lasts even for a moment. 'It will be, and it has been,' is the life of man. The life that lives to-morrow in the next incarnation is no more the life that died in the last than the flame we light in the lamp to-day is the same that went out yesternight. It is as if a stone were thrown into a pool—that is the life, the splash of the stone; all that remains, when the stone lies resting in the mud and weeds below the waters of forgetfulness, are the circles ever widening on the surface, and the ripples never dying, but only spreading farther and farther away. And all this

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

seemed to me a mystery such as I could not 775
understand. But when I went to the people, I 779
found that it was simple enough to them; for 771
I found that they remembered their former lives 779
often, that children, young children, could tell who 182
they were before they died, and remember details of that former existence. As they grew older the remembrance grew fainter and fainter, and at length almost died away. But in many children it was quite fresh, and was believed in beyond possibility of a doubt by all the people. So I saw that the teachings of their sacred books and the thoughts of the people were not at one in this matter.

Again, I read that there was no God. Nats 776
there were, spirits of great power like angels, and 779
there was the Buddha (the just man made perfect), 182
who had worked out for all men the way to reach surcease from evil; but of God I saw nothing. And because the Buddha had reached heaven (Nirvana), it would be useless to pray to him. For, having entered into his perfect rest, he could not be disturbed by the sharp cry of those suffering below; and if he heard, still he could not help; for each man must through pain and sorrow work out for himself his own salvation. So all prayer is futile.

And then I remembered I had seen the young mother going to the pagoda on the hilltop with a little offering of a few roses or an orchid spray, and pouring out her soul in passionate supplication to Someone—Someone unknown to her sacred books—that her firstborn might recover of his fever, and be to her once more the measureless

776 delight of her life; and it would seem to me that
779 she must believe in a God and in prayer after all.

182 So though I found much in these books that
771 was believed by the people, and much that was
779 to them the guiding influence of their lives, yet I
182 was unable to trust to them altogether, and I was
in doubt where to seek for the real beliefs of these
people. If I went to their monks, their holy men,
the followers of the great teacher, Gaudama, they
referred me to their books as containing all that
a Buddhist believed; and when I pointed out the
discrepancies, they only shook their heads, and said
that the people were an ignorant people and confused their beliefs in that way.

779 When I asked what was a Buddhist, I was told
795 that, to be a Buddhist, a man must be accepted into
182 the religion with certain rites, certain ceremonies, he
must become for a time a member of the community
of the monks of the Buddha, and that a Buddhist
was he who was so accepted, and who thereafter
held by the teachings of the Buddha.

But when I searched the life of the Buddha, I could not find any such ceremonies necessary at all. So that it seemed that the religion of the Buddha was one religion, and the religion of the Buddhists another; but when I said so to the monks, they were horror-struck, and said that it was because I did not understand.

114 In my perplexity I fell back, as we all must, to
182 my own thoughts and those of my own people; and
●779 I tried to imagine how a Burman would act if he
101 came to England to search into the religion of the
English and to know the impulses of our lives.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

I saw how he would be sent to the Bible as the 114
source of our religion, how he would be told to study 182
that if he would know what we believed and what 779●
we did not—what it was that gave colour to our 101
lives. I followed him in imagination as he took the Bible and studied it, and then went forth and watched our acts, and I could see him puzzled, as I was now puzzled when I studied his people.

I thought of him reading the New Testament, 000
and how he would come to these verses:

'27. But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

'28. Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

'29. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek, offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke, forbid him not to take thy coat also.

'30. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.'

He would read them again and again, these wonderful verses, that he was told the people and Church believed, and then he would go forth to observe the result of this belief. And what would he see? He would see this: A nation proud and revengeful, glorying in her victories, always at war, a conqueror of other peoples, a mighty hater of her enemies. He would find that in the public life of the nation with other nations there was no thought of this command. He would find, too, in her inner life, that the man who took a cloak was not forgiven, but was terribly punished—he used to be hanged.

CHAPTER II

HE WHO FOUND THE LIGHT—I

'He who pointed out the way to those that had lost it.'
Life of the Buddha.

779
771

THE life-story of Prince Theiddatha, who saw the light and became the Buddha twenty-five centuries ago, has been told in English many times. It has been told in translations from the Pali, from Burmese, and from Chinese, and now everyone has read it. The writers, too, of these books have been men of great attainments, of untiring industry in searching out all that can be known of this life, of gifts such as I cannot aspire to. So that there is now nothing new to learn of those long past days, nothing fresh for me to tell, no discovery that can be made. And yet in thinking out what I have to say about the religion of the Burmese, I have found that I must tell again some of the life of the Buddha, I must rewrite this ten-times-told tale, of which I know nothing new. And the reason is this: that although I know nothing that previous writers have not known, although I cannot bring to the task anything like their knowledge, yet I have something to say that

779 771

they have not said. For they have written of him as they have learned from books, whereas I want to write of him as I have learned from men. Their knowledge has been taken from the records of the dead past, whereas mine is from the actualities of the living present.

I do not mean that the Buddha of the sacred books and the Buddha of the Burman's belief are different persons. They are the same. But as I found it with their faith, so I find it with the life of their teacher. The Burmese regard the life of the Buddha from quite a different standpoint to that of an outsider, and so it has to them quite a different value, quite a different meaning, to that which it has to the student of history. For to the writer who studies the life of the Buddha with a view merely to learn what that life was, and to criticise it, everything is very different to what it is to the Buddhist who studies that life because he loves it and admires it, and because he desires to follow it. To the former the whole detail of every portion of the life of the Buddha, every word of his teaching, every act of his ministry, is sought out and compared and considered. Legend is compared with legend, and tradition with tradition, that out of many authorities some clue to the actual fact may be found. But to the Buddhist the important parts in the great teacher's life are those acts, those words, that appeal directly to him, that stand out bravely, lit with the light of his own experiences and feelings, that assist him in living his own life. His Buddha is the Buddha he understands, and who understood and sympathized with such as him.

779 Other things may be true, but they are matters of
771 indifference.

To hear of the Buddha from living lips in this country, which is full of his influence, where the spire of his monastery marks every village, and where every man has at one time or another been his monk, is quite a different thing to reading of him in far countries, under other skies and swayed by other thoughts. To sit in the monastery garden in the dusk, in just such a tropic dusk as he taught in so many years ago, and hear the yellow-robed monk tell of that life, and repeat his teaching of love, and charity, and compassion—eternal love, perfect charity, endless compassion—until the stars come out in the purple sky, and the silver-voiced gongs ring for evening prayers, is a thing never to be forgotten. As you watch the starlight die and the far-off hills fade into the night, as the sounds about you become still, and the calm silence of the summer night falls over the whole earth, you know and understand the teacher of the Great Peace as no words can tell you. A sympathy comes to you from the circle of believers, and you believe, too. An influence and an understanding breathes from the nature about you—the same nature that the teacher saw—from the whispering fig-trees and the scented champaks, and the dimly seen statues in the shadows of the shrines, that you can never gain elsewhere. And as they tell you the story of that great life, they bring it home to you with reflection and comment, with application to your everyday existence, till you forget that he of whom they speak lived so long ago, so very long

ago, and your heart is filled with sorrow when you 779
remember that he is dead, that he is entered into 771
his peace.

I do not hope that I can convey much of this in my writing. I always feel the hopelessness of trying to put on paper the great thoughts, the intense feeling, of which Buddhism is so full. But still I can, perhaps, give something of this life as I have heard it, make it a little more living than it has been to us, catch some little of that spirit of sympathy that it holds for all the world.

Around the life of the Buddha has gathered much 779
myth, like dust upon an ancient statue, like shadows upon the mountains far away, blurring detail here and there, and hiding the beauty. There are all sorts of stories of the great portents that foretold his coming: how the sun and the stars knew, and how the wise men prophesied. Marvels attended his birth, and miracles followed him in life and in death. And the appearance of the miraculous has even been heightened by the style of the chroniclers in telling us of his mental conflicts: by the personification of evil in the spirit man, and of desire in his three beautiful daughters.

All the teacher's thoughts, all his struggles, are materialized into forms, that they may be more readily brought home to the reader, that they may be more clearly realized by a primitive people as actual conflicts.

Therefore at first sight it seems that of all creeds none is so full of miracle, so teeming with the supernatural, as Buddhism, which is, indeed, the very reverse of the truth. For to the supernatural

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779 Buddhism owes nothing at all. It is in its very essence opposed to all that goes beyond what we can see of earthly laws, and miracle is never used as evidence of the truth of any dogma or of any doctrine.

If every supernatural occurrence were wiped clean out of the chronicles of the faith, Buddhism would, even to the least understanding of its followers, remain exactly where it is. Not in one jot or tittle would it suffer in the authority of its teaching. The great figure of the teacher would even gain were all the tinsel of the miraculous swept from him, so that he stood forth to the world as he lived—would gain not only to our eyes, but even to theirs who believe in him. For the Buddha was no prophet. He was no messenger from any power above this world, revealing laws of that power. No one came to whisper into his ear the secrets of eternity, and to show him where truth lived. In no trance, in no vision, did he enter into the presence of the Unknown, and return from thence full of the wisdom of another world; neither did he teach the worship of any god, of any power. He breathed no threatenings of revenge for disobedience, of forgiveness for the penitent. He held out no everlasting hell to those who refused to follow him, no easily gained heaven to his believers.

He went out to seek wisdom, as many a one has done, looking for the laws of God with clear eyes to see, with a pure heart to understand, and after many troubles, after many mistakes, after much suffering, he came at last to the truth.

Even as Newton sought for the laws of God in the movement of the stars, in the falling of a stone, in the stir of the great waters, so this Newton of the spiritual world sought for the secrets of life and death, looking deep into the heart of man, marking its toil, its suffering, its little joys with a soul attuned to catch every quiver of the life of the world. And as to Newton truth did not come spontaneously, did not reveal itself to him at his first call, but had to be sought with toil and weariness, till at last he reached it where it hid in the heart of all things, so it was with the prince. He was not born with the knowledge in him, but had to seek it as every other man has done. He made mistakes as other men do. He wasted time and labour following wrong roads, demonstrating to himself the foolishness of many thoughts. But, never discouraged, he sought on till he found, and what he found he gave as a heritage to all men for ever, that the way might be easier for them than it had been for him.

Nothing is more clear than this: that to the Buddhist his teacher was but a man like himself, erring and weak, who made himself perfect, and that even as his teacher has done, so, too, may he if he do but observe the everlasting laws of life which the Buddha has shown to the world. These laws are as immutable as Newton's laws, and come, like his, from beyond our ken.

And this, too, is another point wherein the parallel with Newton will help us: that just as when Newton discovered gravitation he was obliged to stop, for his knowledge of that did not lead him at once to the knowledge of the infinite, so when he had attained the laws of righteousness, Gaudama the

16 Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779 Buddha also stopped, because here his standing-ground failed. It is not true, that which has been imputed to the Buddha by those who have never tried to understand him—that he denied some power greater than ourselves; that because he never tried to define the indefinite, to confine the infinite within the corners of a phrase, therefore his creed was materialistic. We do not say of Newton that he was an atheist because when he taught us of gravity he did not go further and define to us in equations Him who made gravity; and as we understand more of the Buddha, as we search into life and consider his teaching, as we try to think as he thought, and to see as he saw, we understand that he stopped as Newton stopped, because he had come to the end of all that he could see, not because he declared that he knew all things, and that beyond his knowledge there was nothing.

No teacher more full of reverence, more humble than Gaudama the Buddha ever lived to be an example to us through all time. He tells us of what he knows; of what he knows not he is silent. Of the laws that he can see, the great sequences of life and death, of evil and sorrow, of goodness and happiness, he tells in burning words. Of the beginning and the end of the world, of the intentions and the ways of the great Unknown, he tells us nothing at all. He is no prophet, as we understand the word, but a man; and all that is divine in him beyond what there is in us is that he hated the darkness and sought the light, sought and was not dismayed, and at last he found.

And yet nothing could be further from the truth

779

than to call the Buddha a philosopher and Buddhism a philosophy. Whatever he was, he was no philosopher. Although he knew not any god, although he rested his claims to be heard upon the fact that his teachings were clear and understandable, that you were not required to believe, but only to open your eyes and see, and 'his delight was in the contemplation of unclouded truth,' yet he was far from a philosopher. His was not an appeal to our reason, to our power of putting two and two together and making five of them ; his teachings were no curious designs woven with words, the counters of his thought. He appealed to the heart, not to the brain ; to our feelings, not to our power of arranging these feelings. He drew men to him by love and reverence, and held them so for ever. Love and charity and compassion, endless compassion, are the foundations of his teachings ; and his followers believe in him because they have seen in him the just man made perfect, and because he has shown to them the way in which all men may become even as he is.

He was a prince in a little kingdom in the North-east of India, the son of King Thudoodana and his wife Maya. He was strong, we are told, and handsome, famous in athletic exercises, and his father looked forward to the time when he should be grown a great man, and a leader of armies. His father's ambition for him was that he should be a great conqueror, that he should lead his troops against the neighbouring kings and overcome them, and in time make for himself a wide-stretching empire. India was in those days, as in many later ones, split up

779 into little kingdoms, divided from each other by no natural boundary, overlooked by no sovereign power, and always at war. And the king, as fathers are, was full of dreams that this son of his should subdue all India to himself, and be the glory of his dynasty, and the founder of a great race.

Everything seemed to fall in with the desire of the king. The prince grew up strong and valiant, skilled in action, wise in counsel, so that all his people were proud of him. Everything fell in with the desire of the king except the prince himself, for instead of being anxious to fight, to conquer other countries, to be a great leader of armies, his desires led him away from all this. Even as a boy he was meditative and given to religious musings, and as he grew up he became more and more confirmed in his wish to know of sacred things, more and more an inquirer into the mysteries of life.

He was taught all the faith of those days, a faith so old that we do not know whence it came. He was brought up to believe that life is immortal, that no life can ever utterly die. He was taught that all life is one; that there is not one life of the beasts and one life of men, but that all life was one glorious unity, one great essence coming from the Unknown. Man is not a thing apart from this world, but of it. As man's body is but the body of beasts, refined and glorified, so the soul of man is but a higher stage of the soul of beasts. Life is a great ladder. At the bottom are the lower forms of animals, and some way up is man; but all are climbing upwards for ever, and sometimes, alas! falling back. Existence is for each man a great struggle, punctuated

779

with many deaths; and each death ends one period but to allow another to begin, to give us a new chance of working up and gaining heaven.

He was taught that this ladder is very high, that its top is very far away, above us, out of our sight, and that perfection and happiness lie up there, and that we must strive to reach them. The greatest man, even the greatest king, was farther below perfection than an animal was below him. We are very near the beasts, but very far from heaven. So he was taught to remember that even as a very great prince he was but a weak and erring soul, and that unless he lived well and did honest deeds and was a true man, instead of rising he might fall.

This teaching appealed to the prince far more than all the urging of his father and of the courtiers that he should strive to become a great conqueror. It entered into his very soul, and his continual thought was how he was to be a better man, how he was to use this life of his so that he should gain and not lose, and where he was to find happiness.

All the pomp and glory of the palace, all its luxury and ease, appealed to him very little. Even in his early youth he found but little pleasure in it, and he listened more to those who spoke of holiness than to those who spoke of war. He desired, we are told, to become a hermit, to cast off from him his state and dignity, and to put on the yellow garments of a mendicant, and beg his bread wandering up and down upon the world, seeking for peace.

This disposition of the prince grieved his parents very much. That their son, who was so full of promise, so brave and so strong, so wise and so

0779

much beloved by everyone, should become a mendicant clad in unclean garments, begging his daily food from house to house, seemed to them a horrible thing. It could never be permitted that a prince should disgrace himself in this way. Every effort must be taken to eradicate such ideas; after all, it was but the melancholy of youth, and it would pass. So stringent orders were given to distract his mind in every way from solemn thoughts, to attempt by a continued round of pleasure and luxury to attract him to more worldly things. And when he was eighteen he was married to his cousin Yathodaya, in the hope that in marriage and paternity he might forget his desire to be a hermit, might feel that love was better than wisdom. And if Yathodaya had been other than she was—who can tell?—perhaps after all the king might have succeeded; but it was not to be so. For to Yathodaya, too, life was a very solemn thing, not to be thrown away in laughter and frivolity, but to be used as a great gift worthy of all care. To the prince in his trouble there came a kindred soul, and though from the palace all the teachers of religion, all who would influence the prince against the desires of his father, were banished, yet Yathodaya more than made up to him for all he had lost. For nearly ten years they lived together there such a life as princes led in those days in the East, not, perhaps, so very different from what they lead now.

And all that time the prince had been gradually making up his mind, slowly becoming sure that life held something better than he had yet found, hardening his determination that he must leave all that he had and go out into the world looking for peace. Despite all the efforts of the king his father, despite the guards and his young men companions, despite the beauty of the dancing-girls, the mysteries of life came home to him, and he was afraid. It is a beautiful story told in quaint imagery how it was that the knowledge of sickness and of death came to him, a horror stalking amid the glories of his garden. He learnt, and he understood, that he too would grow old, would fall sick, would die. And beyond death? There was the fear, and no one could allay it. Daily he grew more and more discontented with his life in the palace, more and more averse to the pleasures that were around him. Deeper and deeper he saw through the laughing surface to the depths that lay beneath. Silently all these thoughts ripened in his mind, till at last the change came. We are told that the end came suddenly, the resolve was taken in a moment. The lake fills and fills until at length it overflows, and in a night the dam is broken, and the pent-up waters are leaping far towards the sea.

As the prince returned from his last drive in his garden with resolve firmly established in his heart, there came to him the news that his wife had borne to him a son. Wife and child, his cup of desire was now full. But his resolve was unshaken. 'See, here is another tie, alas! a new and stronger tie that I must break,' he said; but he never wavered.

That night the prince left the palace. Silently in the dead of night he left all the luxury about him, and went out secretly with only his faithful

779

servant, Maung San, to saddle for him his horse and lead him forth. Only before he left he looked in cautiously to see Yathodaya, the young wife and mother. She was lying asleep, with one hand upon the face of her firstborn, and the prince was afraid to go further. 'To see him,' he said, 'I must remove the hand of his mother, and she may awake; and if she awake, how shall I depart? I will go, then, without seeing my son. Later on, when all these passions are faded from my heart, when I am sure of myself, perhaps then I shall be able to see him. But now I must go.'

So he went forth very silently and very sadly, and leapt upon his horse—the great white horse that would not neigh for fear of waking the sleeping guards—and the prince and his faithful noble Maung San went out into the night. He was only twenty-eight when he fled from all his world, and what he sought was this: 'Deliverance for men from the misery of life, and the knowledge of the truth that will lead them unto the Great Peace.'

This is the great renunciation.

I have often talked about this with the monks and others, often heard them speak about this great renunciation, of this parting of the prince and his wife.

'You see,' said a monk once to me, 'he was not yet the Buddha, he had not seen the light, only he was desirous to look for it. He was just a prince, just a man like any other man, and he was very fond of his wife. It is very hard to resist a woman if she loves you and cries, and if you love her. So he was afraid.'

And when I said that Yathodaya was also religious and had helped him in his thoughts, and that surely she would not have stopped him, the monk shook his head.

'Women are not like that,' he said.

And a woman said to me once: 'Surely she was very much to be pitied because her husband went away from her and her baby. Do you think that when she talked religion with her husband she ever thought that it would cause him to leave her and go away for ever? If she had thought that, she would never have done as she did. A woman would never help anything to sever her husband from her, not even religion. And when after ten years a baby had come to her! Surely she was very much to be pitied.' This woman made me understand that the highest religion of a woman is the true love of her husband, of her children; and what is it to her if she gain the whole world, but lose that which she would have?

All the story of Yathodaya and her dealings with her husband is full of the deepest pathos, full of passionate protest against her loss, even in order that her husband and all the world should gain. She would have held him, if she could, against the world, and deemed that she did well. And so, though it is probable that it was a great deal owing to Yathodaya's help, to her sympathy, to her support in all his difficulties, that Gaudama came to his final resolve to leave the world and seek for the truth, yet she acted unwittingly of what would be the end.

'She did not know,' said the woman. 'She

771 helped her husband, but she did not know to what.
771 And when she was ill, when she was giving birth to her baby, then her husband left her. Surely she was very much to be pitied.'

And so Yathodaya, the wife of the Prince Gaudama, who became the Buddha, is held in high honour, in great esteem, by all Buddhists. By the men, because she helped her husband to his resolve to seek for the truth, because she had been his great stay and help when everyone was against him, because if there had been no Yathodaya there had been perchance no Buddha. And by the women—I need not say why she is honoured by all women. If ever there was a story that appealed to woman's heart, surely it is this: her love, her abandonment, her courage, her submission when they met again in after-years, her protest against being sacrificed upon the altar of her husband's religion. Truly, it is all of the very essence of humanity. Whenever the story of the Buddha comes to be written, then will be written also the story of the life of Yathodaya his wife. And if one is full of wisdom and teaching, the other is full of suffering and teaching also. I cannot write it here. I have so much to say on other matters that there is no room. But some day it will be written. I trust, this old message to a new world.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER III

HE WHO FOUND THE LIGHT—II

'He who never spake but good and wise words, he who was the light of the world, has found too soon the Peace.'—*Lament on the death of the Buddha.*

THE prince rode forth into the night, and as he went, even in the first flush of his resolve, temptation came to him. As the night closed behind he remembered all he was leaving: he remembered his father and his mother; his heart was full of his wife and child. 779 ●

'Return!' said the devil to him. 'What seek you here? Return, and be a good son, a good husband, a good father. Remember all that you are leaving to pursue vain thoughts. You are a great man—you might be a great king, as your father wishes—a mighty conqueror of nations. The night is very dark, and the world before you is very empty.'

And the prince's heart was full of bitterness at the thought of those he loved, of all that he was losing. Yet he never wavered. He would not even turn to look his last on the great white city lying in a silver dream behind him. He set his face upon

779 his way, trampling beneath him every worldly consideration, despising a power that was but vanity and illusion; he went on into the dark.

Presently he came to a river, the boundary of his father's kingdom, and here he stopped. Then the prince turned to Maung San, and told him that he must return. Beyond the river lay for the prince the life of a holy man, who needed neither servant nor horse, and Maung San must return. All his prayers were in vain; his supplications that he might be allowed to follow his master as a disciple; his protestations of eternal faith. No, he must return; so Maung San went back with the horse, and the prince was alone.

As he waited there alone by the river, alone in the dark waiting for the dawn ere he could cross, alone with his own fears and thoughts, doubt came to him again. He doubted if he had done right, whether he should ever find the light, whether, indeed, there was any light to find, and in his doubt and distress he asked for a sign. He desired that it might be shown to him whether all his efforts would be in vain or not, whether he should ever win in the struggle that was before him. We are told that the sign came to him, and he knew that, whatever happened, in the end all would go well, and he would find that which he sought.

So he crossed the river out of his father's kingdom into a strange country, and he put on the garment of a recluse, and lived as they did.

He sought his bread as they did, going from house to house for the broken victuals, which he collected in a bowl, retiring to a quiet spot to eat.

The first time he collected this strange meal and attempted to eat, his very soul rose against the distastefulness of the mess. He who had been a prince, and accustomed to the very best of everything, could not at first bring himself to eat such fare, and the struggle was bitter. But in the end here, too, he conquered. 'Was I not aware,' he said, with bitter indignation at his weakness, 'that when I became a recluse I must eat such food as this? Now is the time to trample upon the appetite of nature.' He took up his bowl, and ate with a good appetite, and the fight had never to be fought again.

So in the fashion of those days he became a seeker after truth. Men, then, when they desired to find holiness, to seek for that which is better than the things of this world, had to begin their search by an utter repudiation of all that which the world holds good. The rich and worldly wore handsome garments, they would wear rags; those of the world were careful of their personal appearance, they would despise it; those of the world were cleanly, the hermits were filthy; those of the world were decent, and had a care for outward observances, and so hermits had no care for either decency or modesty. The world was evil, surely, and therefore all that the world held good was surely evil too. Wisdom was to be sought in the very opposites of the conventions of men.

The prince took on him their garments, and went to them to learn from all that which they had learnt. He went to all the wisest hermits of the land, to those renowned for their wisdom and holiness; and this is what they taught him, this is all the light they

779

gave to him who came to them for light. 'There are,' they said, 'the soul and the body of man, and they are enemies; therefore, to purify the soul, you must destroy and punish the body. All that the body holds good is evil to the soul.' And so they purified their souls by ceremonies and forms, by torture and starvation, by nakedness and contempt of decency, by nameless abominations. And the young prince studied all their teaching, and essayed to follow their example, and he found it was all of no use. Here he could find no way to happiness, no raising of the soul to higher planes, but, rather, a degradation towards the beasts. For self-punishment is just as much a submission to the flesh as luxury and self-indulgence. How can you forget the body, and turn the soul to better thoughts, if you are for ever torturing that body, and thereby keeping it in memory? You can keep your lusts just as easily before your eyes by useless punishment as by indulgence. And how can you turn your mind to meditation and thought if your body is in suffering? So the prince soon saw that here was not the way he wanted. His soul revolted from them and their austerities, and he left them. As he fathomed the emptiness of his counsellors of the palace, so he fathomed the emptiness of the teachers of the cave and monastery. If the powerful and wealthy were ignorant, wisdom was not to be found among the poor and feeble, and he was as far from it as when he left the palace. And yet he did not despair. Truth was somewhere, he was sure; it must be found if only it be looked for with patience and sincerity, and he would find it. Surely there was a greater wisdom than mere contempt of wealth and comfort, surely a greater happiness than could be found in self-torture and hysteria. And so, as he could find no one to teach him, he went out into the forest to look for truth there. In the great forests where no one comes, where the deer feed and the tiger creeps, he would seek what man could not give him. They would know, those great trees that had seen a thousand rains, and outlived thirty generations of men; they would know, those streams that flashed from the far snow summits; surely the forest and the hills, the dawn and the night, would have something to tell him of the secrets of the world. Nature can never lie, and here, far away from the homes of men, he would learn that knowledge that men could not give him. With a body purified by abstinence, with a heart attuned by solitude, he would listen as the winds talked to the mountains in the dawn, and understand the beckoning of the stars. And so, as many others did then and afterwards, he left mankind and went to Nature for help. For six years he lived so in the fastnesses of the hills.

We are told but very little of those six years, only that he was often very lonely, often very sad with the remembrance of all whom he had left. 'Think not,' he said many years later to a favourite disciple—'think not that I, though the Buddha, have not felt all this even as any other of you. Was I not alone when I was seeking for wisdom in the wilderness? And yet what could I have gained by wailing and lamentation either for myself or for others? Would it have brought to me any solace

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

●779 from my loneliness? Would it have been any help to those I had left?'

And we are told that his fame as a solitary, as a man who communed with Nature, and subdued his own lower feelings, was so great that all men knew of it. His fame was as a 'bell hung in the canopy of the skies,' that all nations heard; and many disciples came to him. But despite all his fame among men, he himself knew that he had not yet come to the truth. Even the great soul of Nature had failed to tell him what he desired. The truth was as far off as ever, so he thought, and to those that came to him for wisdom he had nothing to teach. So, at the end of six years, despairing of finding that which he sought, he entered upon a great fast, and he pushed it to such an extreme that at length he fainted from sheer exhaustion and starvation.

And when he came to himself he recognized that he had failed again. No light had shone upon his dimmed eyes, no revelation had come to him in his senselessness. All was as before, and the truth—the truth, where was that?

He was no inspired teacher. He had no one to show him the way he should go; he was tried with failure, with failure after failure. He learnt as other men learn, through suffering and mistake. Here was his third failure. The rich had failed him, and the poor; even the voices of the hills had not told him of what he would know, even the radiant finger of dawn had pointed to him no way to happiness. Life was just as miserable, as empty, as meaningless, as before.

All that he had done was in vain, and he must try again, must seek out some new way, if he were ever to find that which he sought.

He rose from where he lay, and took his bowl in his hands and went to the nearest village, and ate heartily and drank, and his strength came back to him, and the beauty he had lost returned.

And then came the final blow: his disciples left him in scorn.

'Behold,' they said to each other, 'he has lived through six years of mortification and suffering in vain. See, now, he goes forth and eats food, and assuredly he who does this will never attain wisdom. Our master's search is not after wisdom, but worldly things; we must look elsewhere for the guidance that we seek.'

They departed, leaving him to bear his disappointment alone, and they went into the solitude far away, to continue in their own way and pursue their search after their own method. He who was to be the Buddha had failed, and was alone.

To the followers of the Buddha, to those of our brothers who are trying to follow his teachings and emulate his example to attain a like reward, can there be any greater help than this: amid the failure and despair of our own lives to remember that the teacher failed, even as we are doing? If we find the way dark and weary, if our footsteps fail, if we wander in wrong paths, did not he do the same? And if we find we have to bear sufferings alone, so had he; if we find no one who can comfort us, neither did he; as we know in our hearts that we stand alone, to fight with our own hands, so did he.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

719 He is no model of perfection whom it is hopeless for us to imitate, but a man like ourselves, who failed and fought, and failed and fought again, and won. And so, if we fail, we need not despair. Did not our teacher fail? What he has done, we can do, for he has told us so. Let us be up again and be of good heart, and we, too, shall win in the end, even as he did. The reward will come in its own good time if we strive and faint not.

Surely this comes home to all of our hearts—this failure of him who found the light. That he should have won—ah, well, that is beautiful, yet by its very success is far away; but that he should have failed and failed, that is what comes home to us, because we too have failed many times. Can you wonder that his followers love him? Can you wonder that his teaching has come home to them as never did teaching elsewhere? I do not think it is hard to see why: it is simply because he was a man as we are. Had he been other than a man, had truth been revealed to him from the beginning, had he never fought, had he never failed, do you think that he would have held the love of men as he does? I fear, had it been so, this people would have lacked a soul.

His disciples left him, and he was alone. He went away to a great grove of trees near by—those beautiful groves of mango and palm and fig that are the delight of the heart in that land of burning, flooding sunshine — and there he slept, defeated, discredited, and abandoned; and there the truth came to him.

There is a story of how a young wife, coming to give her little offerings to the spirit of the great fig-tree, saw him, and took him for the spirit, so beautiful was his face as he rose.

There are spirits in all the great trees, in all the rivers, in all the hills—very beautiful, very peaceful, loving calm and rest.

The woman thought he was the spirit come down to accept her offering, and she gave it to him—the cup of curdled milk—in fear and trembling, and he took it. The woman went away again full of hope and joy, and the prince remained in the grove. He lived there for forty-nine days, we are told, under the great fig-tree by the river. And the fig-tree has become sacred for ever because he sat there and because there he found the truth. We are told of it all in wonderful trope and imagery—of his last fight over sin, and of his victory.

There the truth came to him at last out of his own heart. He had sought for it in men and in Nature, and found it not, and, lo! it was in his own heart.

When his eyes were cleared of imaginings, and his body purified by temperance, then at last he saw, down in his own soul, what he had sought the world over for. Every man carries it there. It is never dead, but lives with our life, this light that we seek. We darken it, and turn our faces from it to follow strange lights, to pursue vague glimmers in the dark, and there, all the time, is the light in each man's own heart. Darkened it may be, crusted over with our ignorance and sin, but never dead, never dim, always burning brightly for us when we care to seek for it.

The truth for each man is in his own soul. And

779 so it came at last, and he who saw the light went forth and preached it to all the world. He lived a long life, a life full of wonderful teaching, of still more marvellous example. All the world loved him.

He saw again Yathodaya, she who had been his wife; he saw his son. Now, when passion was dead in him, he could do these things. And Yathodaya was full of despair, for if all the world had gained a teacher, she had lost a husband. So it will be for ever. This is the difference between men and women. She became a nun, poor soul! and her son—his son—became one of his disciples.

I do not think it is necessary for me to tell much more of his life. Much has been told already by Professor Max Müller and other scholars, who have spared no pains to come to the truth of that life. I do not wish to say more. So far, I have written to emphasize the view which, I think, the Burmese take of the Buddha, and how he came to his wisdom, how he loved, and how he died.

He died at a great age, full of years and love. The story of his death is most beautiful. There is nowhere anything more wonderful than how, at the end of that long good life, he entered into the Great Peace for which he had prepared his soul.

'Ananda,' he said to his weeping disciple, 'do not be too much concerned with what shall remain of me when I have entered into the Peace, but be rather anxious to practise the works that lead to perfection; put on these inward dispositions that will enable you also to reach the everlasting rest.'

And again:

'When I shall have left life and am no more seen by you, do not believe that I am no longer with you. You have the laws that I have found, you have my teachings still, and in them I shall be ever beside you. Do not, therefore, think that I have left you alone for ever.'

And before he died:

'Remember,' he said, 'that life and death are one. Never forget this. For this purpose have I gathered you together; for life and death are one.'

And so 'the great and glorious teacher,' he who never spoke but good and wise words, he who has been the light of the world, entered into the Peace.

CHAPTER IV

THE WAY TO THE GREAT PEACE

'Come to Me: I teach a doctrine which leads to deliverance from all the miseries of life.'—*Saying of the Buddha.*

779 To understand the teaching of Buddhism, it must
774 be remembered that to the Buddhist, as to the
Brahmin, man's soul is eternal.

In other faiths and other philosophies this is not so. There the soul is immortal; it cannot die, but each man's soul appeared newly on his birth. Its beginning is very recent.

To the Buddhist the beginning as well as the end is out of our ken. Where we came from we cannot know, but certainly the soul that appears in each newborn babe is not a new thing. It has come from everlasting, and the present life is merely a scene in the endless drama of existence. A man's identity, the sum of good and of evil tendencies, which is his soul, never dies, but endures for ever. Each body is but a case wherein the soul is enshrined for the time.

And the state of that soul, whether good predominate in it or evil, is purely dependent on that soul's thoughts and actions in time past.

Men are not born by chance wise or foolish, 777
righteous or wicked, strong or feeble. A man's 774
condition in life is the absolute result of an eternal law that as a man sows so shall he reap; that as he reaps so has he sown.

Therefore, if you find a man's desires naturally given towards evil, it is because he has in his past lives educated himself to evil. And if he is righteous and charitable, long-suffering and full of sympathy, it is because in his past existence he has cultivated these virtues; he has followed goodness, and it has become a habit of his soul.

Thus is every man his own maker. He has no one to blame for his imperfections but himself, no one to thank for his virtues but himself. Within the unchangeable laws of righteousness each man is absolutely the creator of himself and of his own destiny. It has lain, and it lies, within each man's power to determine what manner of man he shall be. Nay, it not only lies within his power to do so, but a man *must* actually mould himself. There is no other way in which he can develop.

Every man has had an equal chance. If matters are somewhat unequal now, there is no one to blame but himself. It is within his power to retrieve it, not perhaps in this short life, but in the next, maybe, or the next.

Man is not made perfect all of a sudden, but takes time to grow, like all valuable things. You might as well expect to raise a teak-tree in your garden in a night as to make a righteous man in a day. And thus not only is a man the sum of his passions, his acts and his thoughts, in past time, 779 774 but he is in his daily life determining his future—what sort of man he shall be. Every act, every thought, has its effect, not only upon the outer world, but upon the inner soul. If you follow after evil, it becomes in time a habit of your soul. If you follow after good, every good act is a beautifying touch to your own soul.

Man is as he has made himself; man will be as he makes himself. This is a very simple theory, surely. It is not at all difficult to understand the Buddhist standpoint in the matter. It is merely the theory of evolution applied to the soul, with this difference: that in its later stages it has become a deliberate and a conscious evolution, and not an unconscious one.

779 The deduction from this is also simple. It is true, says Buddhism, that every man is the architect of himself, that he can make himself as he chooses. Now, what every man desires is happiness. As a man can form himself as he will, it is within his power to make himself happy, if he only knows how. Let us therefore carefully consider what happiness is, that we may attain it; what misery is, that we may avoid it.

It is a commonplace of many religions, and of many philosophies—nay, it is the actual base upon which they have been built, that this is an evil world.

Mahommedanism, indeed, and Judaism thought that the world was really a capital place, and that it was worth while doing well in order to enjoy it. But most other faiths thought very differently. Indeed, the very meaning of most religions and philosophies has been that they should be refuges

779

from the wickedness and unhappiness of the world. According to them the world has been a very weary world, full of wickedness and of deceit, of war and strife, of untruth and of hate, of all sorts of evil.

The world has been wicked, and man has been unhappy in it.

I do not know that any theory has usually been propounded to explain why this is so. It has been accepted as a fact that man is unhappy, accepted, I think, by most faiths over the world. Indeed, it is the belief that has been, one thinks, the cause of faiths. Had the world been happy, surely there had been no need of religions. In a summer sea, where is the need of havens? It is a generally accepted fact, accepted, as I have said, without explanation. But the Buddhist has not been contented to leave it so. He has thought that it is in the right explanation of this cardinal fact that lies all truth. Life suffers from a disease called misery. He would be free from it. 'Let us, then,' says the Buddhist, 'first discover the cause of this misery, and so only can we understand how to cure it.'

It is this explanation which is really the distinguishing tenet of Buddhism, which differentiates it from all other faiths and all philosophies.

The reason, says Buddhism, why men are unhappy is that they are alive. Life and sorrow are inseparable—nay, they are one and the same thing. The mere fact of being alive is a misery. When you have clear eyes and discern the truth, you shall see this without a doubt, says the Buddhist. For consider, What man has ever sat down and said: 'Now am I in perfect happiness; just as I

● 779 now am would I like to remain for ever and for ever without change'? No man has ever done so. What men desire is change. They weary of the present, and desire the future; and when the future comes they find it no better than the past. Happiness lies in yesterday and in to-morrow, but never in to-day. In youth we look forward, in age we look back. What is change but the death of the present? Life is change, and change is death, so says the Buddhist. Men shudder at and fear death, and yet death and life are the same thing—inseparable, indistinguishable, and one with sorrow. We men who desire life are as men athirst and drinking of the sea. Every drop we drink of the poisoned sea of existence urges on men surely to greater thirst still. Yet we drink on blindly, and say that we are athirst.

This is the explanation of Buddhism. The world is unhappy because it is alive, because it does not see that what it should strive for is not life, not change and hurry and discontent and death, but peace — the Great Peace. There is the goal to which a man should strive.

See now how different it is from the Christian theory. In Christianity there are two lives—this and the next. The present is evil, because it is under the empire of the devil—the world, the flesh, and the devil. The next will be beautiful, because it is under the reign of God, and the devil cannot intrude.

But Buddhism acknowledges only one life—an existence that has come from the forever, that may extend to the forever. If this life is evil, then is all life evil, and happiness can live but in peace,

779

in surcease from the troubles of this weary world. If, then, a man desire happiness—and in all faiths that is the desired end—he must strive to attain peace. This, again, is not a difficult idea to understand. It seems to me so simple that, when once it has been listened to, it may be understood by a child. I do not say believed and followed, but understood. Belief is a different matter. The law is deep; it is difficult to know and to believe it. It is very sublime, and can be comprehended only by means of earnest meditation,' for Buddhism is not a religion of children, but of men.

This is the doctrine that has caused Buddhism to be called pessimism. Taught, as we have been taught, to believe that life and death are antagonistic, that life in the world to come is beautiful, that death is a horror, it seems to us terrible to think that it is indeed our very life itself that is the evil to be eradicated, and that life and death are the same. But to those that have seen the truth, and believed it, it is not terrible, but beautiful. When you have cleansed your eyes from the falseness of the flesh, and come face to face with truth, it is beautiful. 'The law is sweet, filling the heart with joy.'

To the Buddhist, then, the end to be obtained is the Great Peace, the mighty deliverance from all sorrow. He must strive after peace; on his own efforts depends success or failure.

When the end and the agent have been determined, there remains but to discover the means, the road whereby the end may be reached. How shall a man so think and so act that he shall come at length unto the Great Peace? And the answer of

●771 Buddhism to this question is here: good deeds and good thoughts—these are the gate wherein alone you may enter into the way. Be honourable and just, be kind and compassionate, truth-loving and averse to wrong—this is the beginning of the road that leads unto happiness. Do good to others, not in order that they may do good to you, but because, by doing so, you do good to your own soul. Give alms, and be charitable, for these things are necessary to a man. Above all, learn love and sympathy. Try to feel as others feel, try to understand them, try to sympathize with them, and love will come. Surely he was a Buddhist at heart who wrote: 'Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner.' There is no balm to a man's heart like love, not only the love others feel towards him, but that he feels towards others. Be in love with all things, not only with your fellows, but with the whole world, with every creature that walks the earth, with the birds in the air, with the insects in the grass. All life is akin to man. Man's life is not apart from other life, but of it, and if a man would make his heart perfect, he must learn to sympathize with and understand all the great world about him. But he must always remember that he himself comes first. To make others just, you must yourself be just; to make others happy, you must yourself be happy first; to be loved, you must first love. Consider your own soul, to make it lovely. Such is the teaching of Buddha. But if this were all, then would Buddhism be but a repetition of the commonplaces of all religions, of all philosophies. In this teaching of righteousness is nothing new. Many teachers have taught it, and all have learnt in the end that righteousness is no sure road to happiness, to peace. Buddhism goes farther than this. Honour and righteousness, truth and love, are, it says, very beautiful things, but are only the beginning of the way; they are but the gate. In themselves they will never bring a man home to the Great Peace. Herein lies no salvation from the troubles of the world. Far more is required of a man than to be righteous. Holiness alone is not the gate to happiness, and all that have tried have found it so. It alone will not give man surcease from pain. When a man has so purified his heart by love, has so weaned himself from wickedness by good acts and deeds, then he shall have eyes to see the further way that he should go. Then shall appear to him the truth that it is indeed life that is the evil to be avoided; that life is sorrow, and that the man who would escape evil and sorrow must escape from life itself—not in death. The death of this life is but the commencement of another, just as, if you dam a stream in one direction, it will burst forth in another. To take one's life now is to condemn one's self to longer and more miserable life hereafter. The end of misery lies in the Great Peace. A man must estrange himself from the world, which is sorrow. Hating struggle and fight, he will learn to love peace, and to so discipline his soul that the world shall appear to him clearly to be the unrest which it is. Then, when his heart is fixed upon the Great Peace, shall his soul come to it at last. Weary of the earth, it shall come into the haven where there are no more storms, where there is no more struggle, 779 but where reigns unutterable peace. It is not death, but the Great Peace.

> 'Ever pure, and mirror bright and even,
> Life among the immortals glides away;
> Moons are waning, generations changing,
> Their celestial life flows everlasting,
> Changeless 'midst a ruined world's decay.'

779 774 This is Nirvana, the end to which we must all strive, the only end that there can be to the trouble of the world. Each man must realize this for himself, each man will do so surely in time, and all will come into the haven of rest. Surely this is a simple faith, the only belief that the world has known that is free from mystery and dogma, from ceremony and priestcraft; and to know that it is a beautiful faith you have but to look at its believers and be sure. If a people be contented in their faith, if they love it and exalt it, and are never ashamed of it, and if it exalts them and makes them happy, what greater testimony can you have than that?

It will seem that indeed I have compressed the teaching of this faith into too small a space—this faith about which so many books have been written, so much discussion has taken place. But I do not think it is so. I cannot see that even in this short chapter I have left out anything that is important in Buddhism. It is such a simple faith that all may be said in a very few words. It would be, of course, possible to refine on and gloze over certain points of the teaching. The real proof of the faith is in the results, in the deeds that men do in its name. Discussion will not alter these one way or another.

CHAPTER V

WAR—I

> 'Love each other and live in peace.'
> *Saying of the Buddha.*

THIS is the Buddhist belief as I have understood it, 779
and I have written so far in order to explain what 182
follows. For my object is not to explain what the Buddha taught, but what the Burmese believe; and this is not quite the same thing, though in nearly every action of their life the influence of Buddhism is visible more or less strongly. Therefore I propose to describe shortly the ideas of the Burmese people upon the main objects of life; and to show how much or how little Buddhism has affected their conceptions. I will begin with courage.

I think it will be evident that there is no quality upon which the success of a nation so much depends as upon its courage. No nation can rise to a high place without being brave; it cannot maintain its independence even; it cannot push forward upon any path of life without courage. Nations that are cowards must fail.

I am aware that the courage of a nation depends, as do its other qualities, upon many things: its

771
721
Religion meant to him something that would help you in your trouble, that would be a stay and a comfort, a sword wherewith to confront your enemies and a prop for yourself. Though he was himself an invader, he felt that the Burmans did no wrong in resisting him. They fought for their homes, as he would have fought; and their religion, if of any value, should assist them. It should urge them to battle, and promise them peace and happiness if dying in a good cause. His faith would do this for him. What was Buddhism doing? What help did it give to its believers in their extremity? It gave none. Think of the peasant lying there in the ghostly dim-lit fields waiting to attack us at the dawn. Where was his help? He thought, perhaps, of his king deported, his village invaded, his friends killed, himself reduced to the subject of a far-off queen. He would fight—yes, even though his faith told him not. There was no help there. His was no faith to strengthen his arm, to straighten his aim, to be his shield in the hour of danger.

If he died, if in the strife of the morning's fight he were to be killed, if a bullet were to still his heart, or a lance to pierce his chest, there was no hope for him of the glory of heaven. No, but every fear of hell, for he was sinning against the laws of righteousness—'Thou shalt take no life.' There is no exception to that at all, not even for a patriot fighting for his country. 'Thou shalt not take the life even of him who is the enemy of your king and nation.' He could count on no help in breaking the everlasting laws that the Buddha has revealed to us. If he went to his monks, they could but say: 'See

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

the law, the unchangeable law that man is subject to. 779
There is no good thing but peace, no sin like strife 721
and war.' That is what the followers of the great teacher would tell the peasant yearning for help to strike a blow upon the invaders. The law is the same for all. There is not one law for you and another for the foreigner; there is not one law to-day and another to-morrow. Truth is for ever and for ever. It cannot change even to help you in your extremity. Think of the English soldier and the Burmese peasant. Can there be anywhere a greater contrast than this?

Truly this is not a creed for a soldier, not a creed for a fighting-man of any kind, for what the soldier wants is a personal god who will always be on his side, always share his opinions, always support him against everyone else. But a law that points out unalterably that right is always right, and wrong always wrong, that nothing can alter one into the other, nothing can ever make killing righteous and violence honourable, that is no creed for a soldier.
And Buddhism has ever done this. It never bent 779
to popular opinion, never made itself a tool in the hands of worldly passion. It could not. You might as well say to gravity, 'I want to lift this stone; please don't act on it for a time,' as expect Buddhism to assist you to make war. Buddhism is the unalterable law of righteousness, and cannot ally itself with evil, cannot ever be persuaded that under any circumstances evil can be good.

And so the Burmese peasant had to fight his 721
own fight in 1885 alone. His king was gone, his 175
government broken up, he had no leaders. He had 701

721 threatened, of how he was sure they would murder
634 him some time, because he had joined us. 'They are sure to kill me some time,' he said. He seemed sad and depressed, not afraid.

So we talked on, and I asked him about charms. 'Are there not charms that will prevent you being hurt if you are hit, and that will not allow a sword to cut you? We hear of invulnerable men. There were the Immortals of the King's Guard, for instance.'

721 And he said, yes, there were charms, but no one
751 believed in them except the villagers. He did not, nor did men of education. Of course, the ignorant people believed in them. There were several sorts of charms. You could be tattooed with certain mystic letters that were said to insure you against being hit, and there were certain medicines you could drink. There were also charms made out of stone, such as a little tortoise he had once seen that was said to protect its wearer. There were mysterious writings on palm-leaves. There were men, he said vaguely, who knew how to make these things. For himself, he did not believe in them.

779 I tried to learn from him then, and I have tried
751 from others since, whether these charms have any connection with Buddhism. I cannot find that they have. They are never in the form of images of the Buddha, or of extracts from the sacred writings. There is not, so far as I can make out, any religious significance in these charms; mostly they are simply mysterious. I never heard that the people connect them with their religion. Indeed, all forms of enchantment and of charms are most strictly prohibited.

One of the vows that monks take is never to have 779
any dealings with charms or with the supernatural, 787
and so Buddhism cannot even give such little assistance to its believers as to furnish them with charms. If they have charms, it is against their faith; it is a falling away from the purity of their teachings; it is simply the innate yearning of man to the supernatural, to the mysterious. Man's passions are very strong, and if he must fight, he must also have a charm to protect him in fight. If his religion cannot give it him, he must find it elsewhere. You see that, as the teachings of the Buddha have never been able to be twisted so as to permit war directly, neither have they been able to assist indirectly by furnishing charms, by making the fighter bullet-proof. And I thought then of the little prayer and the cross that were so certain a defence against hurt.

We talked for a long time in the waning moonlight by the ruddy fire, and at last we broke up to go to bed. As we rose a voice called to us across the water from the little promontory. In the still night every word was as clear as the note of a gong. 000

'Sleep well,' it cried—'sleep well—sle-e-ep we-l-l.'

We all stood astonished—those who did not know Burmese wondering at the voice; those who did, wondering at the meaning. The sentries peered keenly towards the sound.

'Sleep well,' the voice cried again; 'eat well. It will not be for long. Sleep well while you may.'

And then, after a pause, it called the governor's

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

000 son's name, and 'Traitor, traitor!' till the hills were full of sound.

The Burman turned away.

'You see,' he said, 'how they hate me. What would be the good of charms?'

The voice was quiet, and the camp sank into stillness, and ere long the moon set, and it was quite dark.

779
577
157 He was a brave man, and, indeed, there are many brave men amongst the Burmese. They kill leopards with sticks and stones very often, and even tigers. They take their frail little canoes across the Irrawaddy in flood in a most daring way. They in no way want for physical courage, but they have never made a cult of bravery; it has never been a necessity to them; it has never occurred to them that it is the prime virtue of a man. You will hear them confess in the calmest way, 'I was afraid.' We would not do that; we should be much more afraid to say it. And the teaching of Buddhism is all in favour of this. Nowhere is courage—I mean aggressive courage—praised. No soldier could be a fervent Buddhist; no nation of Buddhists could be good soldiers; for not only does Buddhism not inculcate bravery, but it does not inculcate obedience. Each man is the ruler of his life, but the very essence of good fighting is discipline, and discipline, subjection, is unknown to Buddhism. Therefore the inherent courage of the Burmans could have no assistance from their faith in any way, but the very contrary: it fought against them.

000 There is no flexibility in Buddhism. It is a law.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

There is no flexibility in Buddhism. It is a law, 779
and nothing can change it. Laws are for ever and 721
for ever, and there are no exceptions to them. The law of the Buddha is against war—war of any kind at all—and there can be no exception. And so every Burman who fought against us knew that he was sinning. He did it with his eyes open; he could never imagine any exception in his favour. Never could he in his bivouac look at the stars, and imagine that any power looked down in approbation of his deeds. No one fought for him. Our bayonets and lances were no keys to open to him the gates of paradise; no monks could come and close his dying eyes with promises of rewards to come. He was sinning, and he must suffer long and terribly for this breach of the laws of righteousness.

If such be the faith of the people, and if they believe their faith, it is a terrible handicap to them in any fight: it delivers them bound into the hands of the enemy. And such is Buddhism.

But it must never be forgotten that, if this faith does not assist the believer in defence, neither does it in offence. What is so terrible as a war of religion? There can never be a war of Buddhism.

No ravished country has ever borne witness to the prowess of the followers of the Buddha; no murdered men have poured out their blood on their hearth-stones, killed in his name; no ruined women have cursed his name to high Heaven. He and his faith are clean of the stain of blood. He was the preacher of the Great Peace, of love, of charity, of compassion, and so clear is his teaching that it can never be misunderstood. Wars of invasion, the Burmese have waged, that is true, in Siam, in

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1896 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779
721

Assam, and in Pegu. They are but men, and men will fight. If they were perfect in their faith the race would have died out long ago. They have fought, but they have never fought in the name of their faith. They have never been able to prostitute its teachings to their own wants. Whatever the Burmans have done, they have kept their faith pure. When they have offended against the laws of the Buddha they have done so openly. Their souls are guiltless of hypocrisy, for whatever that may avail them; they have known the difference between good and evil, even if they have not always followed the good.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

000 people themselves—a hundred years behind them in civilization, a thousand years behind them in morality. Men will do in the name of government acts which, if performed in a private capacity, would cover them with shame before men, and would land them in a gaol or worse. The name of government is a cloak for the worst passions of manhood. It is not an interesting study, the government of mankind.

642 A government is no part of the soul of the people,
● 779 but is a mere excrescence; and so I have but little to say about this of Burma, beyond this curious fact—that religion had no part in it. Surely this is a very remarkable thing, that a religion having the hold upon its followers that Buddhism has upon the Burmese has never attempted to grasp the supreme authority and use it to its ends.

It is not quite an explanation to say that Buddhism is not concerned with such things; that its very spirit is against the assumption of any worldly power and authority; that it is a negation of the value of these things. Something of this sort might be said of other religions, and yet they have all striven to use the temporal power.

I do not know what the explanation is unless it be that the Burmese believe their religion and other people do not. However that may be, there is no doubt of the fact. Religion had nothing whatever —absolutely nothing in any way at all—to do with
642 government. There are no exceptions. What has
793 led people to think sometimes that there were excep-
795 tions is the fact that the king confirmed the Thathanabaing—the head of the community of monks—

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

it well, no one can doubt. They taxed themselves without friction, they built their own monastery schools by voluntary effort, they maintained a very high, a very simple, code of morals, entirely of their own initiative. 621

All this has passed, or is passing away. The king has gone to a banishment far across the sea, the ministers are either banished or powerless for good or evil. It will never rise again, this government of the king, which was so bad in all it did, and only good in what it left alone. It will never rise again. The people are now part of the British Empire, subjects of the Queen. What may be in store for them in the far future no one can tell, only we may be sure that the past can return no more. And the local government is passing away, too. It cannot exist with a strong government such as ours. For good or for evil, in a few years it, too, will be gone. 175 621 642

But, after all, these are but forms; the soul is far within. In the soul there will be no change. No one can imagine even in the far future any monk of the Buddha desiring temporal power, or interfering in any way with the government of the people. That is why I have written this chapter, to show how Buddhism holds itself towards the government. With us, we are accustomed to ecclesiastics trying to manage affairs of state, or attempting to grasp the secular power. It is in accordance with our ideals that they should do so. Our religious phraseology is full of such terms as lord and king and ruler and servant. Buddhism knows nothing of any of them. In our religion we 000 779 642

779
642

are subject to the authority of deacons and priests and bishops and archbishops, and so on up to the Almighty Himself. But in Buddhism every man is free—free, subject to the inevitable laws of righteousness. There is no hierarchy in Buddhism: it is a religion of absolute freedom. No one can damn you except yourself; no one can save you except yourself. Governments cannot do it, and therefore it would be useless to try and capture the reins of government, even if you did not destroy your own soul in so doing. Buddhism does not believe that you can save a man by force.

And as Buddhism was, so it is, so it will remain. By its very nature it abhors all semblance of authority. It has proved that, under temptation such as no other religion has felt, and resisted; it is a religion of each man's own soul, not of governments and powers.

16;Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

685 what was justice, and what was punishment. To
671 the Burman all these words had one set of mean-
196 ings; to the Englishman they had another, a very
different one. And each of them took his ideas from his religion. To all men the law here on earth is but a reflection of the heavenly law; the judge is the representative of his god. The justice of the court should be as the justice of heaven. Many nations have imagined their law to be heaven-given, to be inspired with the very breath of the Creator of the world. Other nations have derived their laws elsewhere. But this is of little account, for to the one, as to the other, the laws are a reflection of the religion.

681 And therefore on a man's religion depends all
671 his views of law and justice, his understanding of
779 the word 'punishment,' his idea of how sin should
196 be treated. And it was because of their different
religions, because their religions differed so greatly on these points as to be almost opposed, that the English officer and his Burman servant failed to understand each other.

For to the Englishman punishment was a degradation. It seemed to him far more disgraceful that his servant should have been in gaol than that he should have committed theft. The theft he was ready to forgive, the punishment he could not. Punishment to him meant revenge. It is the revenge of an outraged and injured morality. The sinner had insulted the law, and therefore the law was to make him suffer. He was to be frightened into not doing it again. That is the idea. He was to be afraid of receiving punishment. And again his punishment was to be useful as a warning to others. Indeed, the magistrate had especially increased it with that object in view. He was to suffer that others might be saved. <The idea of punishment being an atonement hardly enters into our minds at all. >To us it is practically a revenge. We do not expect people to be the better for it. We are sure they are the worse. It is a deterrent for others, not a healing process for the man himself. We punish A. that B. may be afraid, and not do likewise. Our thoughts are bent on B., not really on A. at all. As far as he is concerned the process is very similar to pouring boiling lead into a wound. We do not wish or intend to improve him, but simply and purely to make him suffer. After we have dealt with him he is never fit again for human society. That was in the officer's thought when he refused to take back his Burmese servant.

681
671
779
196

Now see the boy's idea.

Punishment is an atonement, a purifying of the soul from the stain of sin. That is the only justification for, and meaning of, suffering. If a man breaks the everlasting laws of righteousness and stains his soul with the stain of sin, he must be purified, and the only method of purification is by suffering. Each sin is followed by suffering, lasting just so long as to cleanse the soul—not a moment less, or the soul would not be white; not a moment more, or it would be useless and cruel. That is the law of righteousness, the eternal inevitable sequence that leads us in the end to wisdom and peace. And as it is with the greater laws, so it should, the Buddhist thinks, be with the lesser laws.

16 Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

681
771

If a man steals, he should have such punishment and for such a time as will wean his soul from theft, as will atone for his sin. Just so much. You see, to him mercy is a falling short of what is necessary, a leaving of work half done, as if you were to leave a garment half washed. Excess of punishment is mere useless brutality. He recognizes no vicarious punishment. He cannot understand that A. should be damned in order to save B. This does not agree with his scheme of righteousness at all. It seems as futile to him as the action of washing one garment twice that another might be clean. Each man should atone for his own sin, *must* atone for his own sin, in order to be freed from it. No one can help him, or suffer for him. If I have a sore throat, it would be useless to blister you for it: that is his idea.

Consider this Burman. He had committed theft. That he admitted. He was prepared to atone for it. The magistrate was not content with that, but made him also atone for other men's sins. He was twice punished, because other men who escaped did ill. That was the first thing he could not understand. And then, when he had atoned both for his own sin and for that of others, when he came out of prison, he was looked upon as in a worse state than if he had never atoned at all. If he had never been in prison, his master would have forgiven his theft and taken him back, but now he would not. The boy was proud of having atoned in full, very full, measure for his sin; the master looked upon the punishment as inconceivably worse than the crime.

So the officer went about and told the story of his boy coming back, and expecting to be taken on again, as a curious instance of the mysterious working of the Oriental mind, as another example of the extraordinary way Easterns argue. 'Just to think,' said the officer, 'he was not ashamed of having been in prison!' And the boy? Well, he probably said nothing, but went away and did not understand, and kept the matter to himself, for they are very dumb, these people, very long-suffering, very charitable. You may be sure that he never railed at the law, or condemned his old master for harshness. 681 779 ●

He would wonder why he was punished because other people had sinned and escaped. He could not understand that vicariousness of punishment is a Christian idea. It would not occur to him that sending him to herd with other criminals, that cutting him off from all the gentle influences of life, from the green trees and the winds of heaven, from the society of women, from the example of noble men, from the teachings of religion, was a curious way to render him a better man. He would suppose it was intended to make him better, that he should leave gaol a better man than when he entered, and he would take the intention for the deed. Under his own king things were not any better. It is true that very few men were imprisoned, fine being the usual punishment, but still, imprisonment there was, and it was very bad of its kind. No government has been able to invent anything better. But he would not compare our government with his, but our theory of punishment with the Buddhist theory 681 779

681 what he had been taught at school. As to the 779 conduct of his master, he would be content to leave that unexplained. The Buddhist is content to leave many things unexplained until he can see the meaning. He is not fond of theories. If he does not know, he says so. 'It is beyond me,' he will say; 'I do not understand.' He has no theory of an occidental mind to explain acts of ours of which he cannot grasp the meaning; he would only not understand.

But the pity of it—think of the pity of it all! Surely there is nothing more pathetic than this: that a sinner should not understand the wherefore of his sentence, that the justice administered to him should be such as he cannot see the meaning of.

674 Certain forms of crime are very rife in Burma. The villages are so scattered, the roads so lonely, the amount of money habitually carried about so large, the people so habitually careless, the difficulty of detection so great, that robbery and kindred crimes are very common; and it is more common in the districts of the delta, long under our rule, than in the newly-annexed province in the north. Under like conditions the Burman is probably no more criminal and no less criminal than other people in the same state of civilization. Crime is a condition caused by opportunity, not by an inherent state of mind, except with the very few, the exceptional individuals; and in Upper Burma there is, now that the turmoil of the annexation is past, very little crime comparatively. There is less money there, and the village system—the control of the

if we can make a bigger figure in the world. Nay, 000
we go beyond this: we believe that work, that drudgery, is a beautiful thing in itself, that perpetual toil and effort is admirable.

This we do because we do not know what to do with our leisure, because we do not know for what to seek, because we cannot enjoy. And so we go back to work, to feverish effort, because we cannot think, and see, and understand. 'Work is a means to leisure,' Aristotle told us long ago, and leisure, adds the Burman, is needed that you may compose your own soul. Work, no doubt, is a necessity, too, but not excess of it.

The necessary thing to a man is not gold, nor position, nor power, but simply his own soul. Nothing is worth anything to him compared with that, for while a man lives, what is the good of all these things if he have no leisure to enjoy them? And when he dies, shall they go down into the void with him? No; but a man's own soul shall go with and be with him for ever.

Like all men, a Burman's ideas of this world are 517
dominated by his religion. His religion says to 779
him, 'Consider your own soul, that is the main thing.' His religion says to him, 'The aim of every man should be happiness.' These are the fundamental parts of his belief; these he learns from his childhood: they are born in him. He looks at all the world by their light. Later on, when he grows older, his religion says to him, 'And happiness is only to be found by renouncing the whole world.' This is a hard teaching. This comes to him slowly, or all Buddhists would be monks; but, meanwhile,

517 if he does but remember the first two precepts, he is
779 on the right path.

He does do this. Happiness is the aim he seeks. Work and power and money are but the means by which he will arrive at the leisure to teach his own soul. First the body, then the spirit; but with us it is surely first the body, and then the body again.

He often watches us with surprise. He sees us work and work and work; he sees us grow old quickly, and our minds get weary; he sees our sympathies grow very narrow, our ideas bent into one groove, our whole souls destroyed for a little money, a little fame, a little promotion, till we go home, and do not know what to do with ourselves, because we have no work and no sympathy with anything; and at last we die, and take down with us our souls—souls fit for nothing but to be driven for ever with a goad behind and a golden fruit in front.

461 But do not suppose that the Burmese are idle. Such a nation of workers was never known. Every man works, every woman works, every child works. Life is not an easy thing, but a hard, and there is a great deal of work to be done. There is not an idle man or woman in all Burma. The class of those who live on other men's labour is unknown. I do not think the Burman would care for such a life, for a certain amount of work is good, he knows. A little work he likes; a good deal of work he does, because he is obliged often to do so to earn even the little he requires. And that is the end. He is a free man, never a slave to other men, nor to himself.

CHAPTER X

THE MONKHOOD—I

779
792

'Let his life be kindness, his conduct righteousness; then in the fulness of gladness he will make an end of grief.'—*Dammapada.*

DURING his lifetime, that long lifetime that remained to him after he had found the light, Gaudama the Buddha gathered round him many disciples. They came to learn from his lips of that truth which he had found, and they remained near him to practise that life which alone can lead unto the Great Peace.

And from time to time, as occasion arose, the teacher laid down precepts and rules to assist those who desired to live as he did—precepts and rules designed to help his disciples in the right way. Thus there arose about him a brotherhood of those who were striving to purify their souls, and lead the higher life, and that brotherhood has lasted ever since, till you see in it the monkhood of to-day, for that is all that the monks are—a brotherhood of men who are trying to live as their great master lived, to purify their souls from the lust of life, to travel the road that reaches unto deliverance. Only that, nothing more.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

There is no idea of priesthood about it at all, 779
for by a priest we understand one who has received 792
from above some power, who is, as it were, a representative on earth of God. Priests, to our thinking, are those who have delegated to them some of that authority of which God is the fountain-head. They can absolve from sin, we think; they can accept into the faith; they can eject from it; they can exhort with authority; they can administer the sacraments of religion; they can speed the parting soul to God; they can damn the parting soul to hell. A priest is one who is clothed with much authority and holiness.

But in Buddhism there is not, there cannot be, anything of all this. The God who lies far beyond our ken has delegated His authority to no one. He works through everlasting laws. His will is manifested by unchangeable sequences. There is nothing hidden about His laws that requires exposition by His agents, nor any ceremonies necessary for acceptance into the faith. Buddhism is a free religion. No one holds the keys of a man's salvation but himself. Buddhism never dreams that anyone can save or damn you but yourself, and so a Buddhist monk is as far away from our ideas of a priest as can be. Nothing could be more abhorrent to Buddhism than any claim of authority, of power, from above, of holiness acquired except by the earnest effort of a man's own soul.

These monks, who are so common all through 792
Burma, whose monasteries are outside every village, who can be seen in every street in the early morning begging their bread, who educate the whole youth

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

792 down become green again, than an elect guilty of such pride be restored to his holy station. Take care for yourself that you do not give way to such an excess.'

779 Is not this teaching the very reverse of that of
787 all other peoples and religions? Can you imagine
the religious teachers of any other religion being
789 warned to keep themselves free from visions? Are
792 not visions and trances, dreams and imaginations,
the very proof of holiness? But here it is not so. These are vain things, foolish imaginations, and he who would lead the pure life must put behind him all such things as mere dram-drinking of the soul.

This is a most wonderful thing, a religion that condemns all mysticisms. It stands alone here amongst all religions, pure from the tinsel of miracle, either past, or present, or to come. And yet this people is, like all young nations, given to superstition: its young men dream dreams, its girls see visions. There are interpreters of dreams, many of them, soothsayers of all kinds, people who will give you charms, and foretell events for you. Just as it was with us not long ago, the mystery, *what is* beyond the world, exercises a curious fascination over them. Everywhere you will meet with traces of it, and I have in another chapter told some of the principal phases of these. But the religion has kept itself pure. No hysteric visions, no madman's dreams, no clever conjurer's tricks, have ever shed a tawdry glory on the monkhood of the Buddha. Amid all the superstition round about them they have remained pure, as they have from passion and desire. Here in the far East, the very home, we

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

think, of the unnatural and superhuman, the very cradle of the mysterious and the wonderful, is a religion which condemns it all, and a monkhood who follow their religion. Does not this out-miracle any miracle?

779
787
789
792

With other faiths it is different: they hold out to those who follow their tenets and accept their ministry that in exchange for the worldly things which their followers renounce they shall receive other gifts, heavenly ones; they will be endued with power from above; they will have authority from on high; they will become the chosen messengers of God; they may even in their trances enter into His heaven, and see Him face to face.

Buddhism has nothing of all this to offer. A man must surrender all the world, with no immediate gain. There is only this: that if he struggle along in the path of righteousness, he will at length attain unto the Great Peace.

A monk who dreamed dreams, who said that the Buddha had appeared to him in a vision, who announced that he was able to prophesy, would be not exalted, but expelled. He would be deemed silly or mad; think of that—mad—for seeing visions, not holy at all! The boys would jeer at him; he would be turned out of his monastery.

A monk is he who observes purity and sanity of life. Hysteric dreams, the childishness of the mysterious, the insanity of the miraculous, are no part of that.

And so a monk has to put behind him everything that is called good in this life, and govern his body and his soul in strict temperance.

16 Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

792 that is no reason why the Buddhist monk or layman
574 should also lower himself by getting angry and
186 resent it; and so you may walk into any monastery
or rest-house and act as you think fit, and no one will interfere with you. Nay, if you even show a little courtesy to the monks, your hosts, they will be glad to talk to you and tell you of their lives and their desires. It is very seldom that a pleasant word or a jest will not bring the monks into forgetting all your offences, and talking to you freely and openly. I have had, I have still, many friends among the monkhood; I have been beholden to them for many kindnesses; I have found them always, peasants as they are, courteous and well-mannered. Nay, there are greater things than these.

792 When my dear friend was murdered at the out-
779 break of the war, wantonly murdered by the soldiers
of a brutal official, and his body drifted down the river, everyone afraid to bury it, for fear of the wrath of government, was it not at last tenderly and lovingly buried by the monks near whose monastery it floated ashore? Would all people have done this? Remember, he was one of those whose army was engaged in subduing the kingdom; whose army imprisoned the king, and had killed, and were killing, many, many hundreds of Burmans. 'We do not remember such things. All men are brothers to the dead.' They are brothers to the living, too. Is there not a great monastery near Kindat, built by an Englishman as a memorial to the monk who saved his life at peril of his own at that same time, who preserved him till help came?

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

Can anyone ever tell when the influence of a monk has been other than for pity or mercy? Surely they believe their religion? I did not know how people could believe till I saw them. 792 779

Martyrdom—what is martyrdom, what is death, for your religion, compared to living within its commands? Death is easy; life it is that is difficult. Men have died for many things: love and hate, and religion and science, for patriotism and avarice, for self-conceit and sheer vanity, for all sorts of things, of value and of no value. Death proves nothing. Even a coward can die well. But a pure life is the outcome only of the purest religion, of the greatest belief, of the most magnificent courage. Those who can live like this can die, too, if need be—have done so often and often; that is but a little matter indeed. No Buddhist would consider that as a very great thing beside a holy life.

There is another difference between us. We think a good death hallows an evil life; no Buddhist would hear of this for a moment.

The reverence in which a monk—ay, even the monk to-day who was but an ordinary man yesterday—is held by the people is very great. All those who address him do so kneeling. Even the king himself was lower than a monk, took a lower seat than a monk in the palace. He is addressed as 'Lord,' and those who address him are his disciples. Poor as he is, living on daily charity, without any power or authority of any kind, the greatest in the land would dismount and yield the road that he should pass. Such is the people's reverence for a holy life. Never was such voluntary homage 792 554 198

16 Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

792
871
212
● 779

Every man all through Burma has gone to a monastery school as a lad, has lived there with the monks, has learnt from them the elements of education and a knowledge of his faith. <It is an exception to find a Burman who cannot read and write.> Sometimes from lack of practice the art is lost in later manhood, but it has always been acquired. The education is not very deep—reading Burmese and writing; simple, very simple, arithmetic; a knowledge of the days and months, and a little geography, perhaps, and history—that is all. But of their religion they learn a great deal. They have to get by heart great portions of the sacred books, stories and teachings, and they have to learn many prayers. They have to recite them, too, as those who have lived much near monasteries know. Several times a day, at about nine o'clock at night, and again before dawn, you will hear the lads intoning clearly and loudly some of the sacred teachings. I have been awakened many a time in the early morning, before the dawn, before even the promise of the dawn in the eastern sky, by the children's voices intoning. And I have put aside my curtain and looked out from my rest-house and seen them in the dim starlight kneeling before the pagoda, the tomb of the great teacher, saying his laws. The light comes rapidly in this country: the sky reddens, the stars die quickly overhead, the first long beams of sunrise are trembling on the dewy bamboo feathers ere they have finished. It is one of the most beautiful sights imaginable to see monks and children kneeling on the bare ground, singing while the dawn comes.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

562
779

In the life of the Buddha nothing is said upon the subject. The great teacher never committed himself to an opinion as to whether men or women were the highest. He had men disciples, he had women disciples; he honoured both. Nowhere in any of his sayings can anything be found to show that he made any difference between them. That monks should be careful and avoid intercourse with women is merely the counterpart of the order that nuns should be careful in their intercourse with men. That man's greatest attraction is woman does not infer wickedness in woman; that woman's greatest attraction is man does not show that man is a devil. Wickedness is a thing of your own heart. If he could be sure that his desire towards women was dead, a monk might see them as much as he liked. The desire is the enemy, not the woman; therefore a woman is not damned because by her man is often tempted to evil; therefore a woman is not praised because by her a man may be led to better thoughts. She is but the outer and unconscious influence.

If, for instance, you cannot see a precipice without wishing to throw yourself down, you blame not the precipice, but your giddiness; and if you are wise you avoid precipices in future. You do not rail against steep places because you have a bad circulation. So it is with women: you should not contemn women because they rouse a devil in man.

And it is the same with man. Men and women are alike subject to the eternal laws. And they are alike subject to the laws of man; in no material

points, hardly even in minor points, does the law 562
discriminate against women. 779

The law as regards marriage and inheritance 562
and divorce will come each in its own place. It 671
is very much the same both for the man and the 586
woman.

The criminal law was the same for both; I have 681
tried to find any difference, and this is all I have found: A woman's life was less valuable than a man's. The price of the body, as it is called, of a woman was less than that of a man. If a woman were accidentally killed, less compensation had to be paid than for a man. I asked a Burman about this once.

'Why is this difference?' I said. 'Why does the law discriminate?'

'It isn't the law,' he said, 'it is a fact. A woman is worth less than a man *in that way*. A maidservant can be hired for less than a manservant, a daughter can claim less than a son. They cannot do so much work; they are not so strong. If they had been worth more, the law would have been the other way; of course they are worth less.'

And so this sole discrimination is a fact, not 562
dogma. It is a fact, no doubt, everywhere. No one 671
would deny it. The pecuniary value of a woman is 428
less than that of a man. As to the soul's value, that is not a question of law, which confines itself to material affairs. But I suppose all laws have been framed out of the necessities of mankind. It was the incessant fighting during the times when our laws grew slowly into shape, the necessity of not allowing the possession of land, and the armed

'Thakin, many men do not care for religion at 562 all, but when a man does do so, he takes it very 782 seriously. He follows it out to the end. He becomes a monk, and surrenders the whole world. But with women it is different. Many women, nearly all women, will like religion, and none will take it seriously. We mix it up with our home-life, and our affections, and our worldly doings; for we like a little of everything.' So said a woman to me.

Is this always true? I do not know, but it is 562 very true in Burma. Nearly all the women are 779 religious, they like to go to the monastery and hear the law, they like to give presents to the monks, they like to visit the pagoda and adore Gaudama the Buddha. I am sure that if it were not for their influence the laws against taking life and against intoxicants would not be observed as stringently as they are. So far they will go. As far as they can use the precepts of religion and retain their home-life they will do so; as it was with Yathodaya so long ago, so it is now. But when religion calls them and says, 'Come away from the world, leave all that you love, all that your heart holds good, for it is naught; see the light, and prepare your soul for peace,' they hold back. This they cannot do; it is far beyond them. 'Thakin, we *cannot do so*. It would seem to us terrible,' that is what they say.

A man who renounces the world is called 'the great glory,' but not so a woman.

I have said that the Buddhist religion holds men and women as equal. If women cannot observe its laws as men do, it is surely their own fault if they be held the less worthy.

562
779

Women themselves admit this. They honour a man greatly who becomes a monk, not so a nun. Nuns have but little consideration. And why? Because what is good for a man is not good for a woman; and if, indeed, renunciation of the world be the only path to the Great Peace, then surely it must be true that women must be born again.

heard of it; and although I thought my heart would 593
break, I did not say anything. I told my husband, 587
"Bring her here, let us live all together; it will be best so." I always did for the best, thakin. So he brought her, and she came to live with us a week ago. Ah, thakin, I did not know! She tramples on me. My head is under her feet. My husband does not care for me, only for her. And to-day, this evening, they went out together for a walk, and my husband took with him the concertina. As they went I could hear him play upon it, and they walked down through the trees, he playing and she leaning upon him. I heard the music.'

Then she began to cry bitterly, sobbing as if her heart would break. And the sunset died out of the sky, and the shadows took all the world and made it gray and dark. No one said anything, only the woman cried.

'Thakin,' she said at last, 'what am I to do? Tell me.'

Then my friend spoke.

'You can divorce him,' he said; 'you can go 586
to the elders and get a divorce. Won't that be 177
best?' 779

'But, thakin, you do not know. We are both Christians; we are married for ever. We were both at the mission-school in Rangoon, and we were married there, "for ever and for ever," so the padre said. We are not married according to Burmese customs, but according to your religion; we are husband and wife for ever.'

My friend said nothing. It seemed to him useless to speak to her of the High Court, five hundred

586 177 miles away, and a decree nisi; it would have been a mockery of her trouble.

779 'Your husband had no right to take a second wife, if you are Christians and married,' he said.

'Ah,' she answered, 'we are Burmans; it is allowed by Burmese law. Other officials do it. What does my husband care that we were married by your law? Here we are alone with no other Christians near. But I would not mind so much,' she went on, 'only she treads me under her feet. And he takes her out and not me, who am the elder wife, and he plays music to her; and I did all for the best. This trouble has come upon me, though all my life I have always acted for the best.'

There came another footstep up the stair, and a man entered. It was her husband. On his return he had missed his wife, and guessed whither she had gone, and had followed her. He came alone.

Then there was a sad scene, only restrained by respect for my friend. I need not tell it. There was a man's side to the question, a strong one. The wife had a terrible temper, a peevish, nagging, maddening fashion of talking. She was a woman very hard for a man to live with.

Does it matter much which was right or wrong, now that the mischief was done? They went away at last, not reconciled. Could they be reconciled? I cannot tell. I left there next day, and have never returned.

There they had lived for many years among their own people, far away from the influence that had come upon their childhood, and led them into strange 586 177 ways. And now all that was left of that influence

Divorce is a dissolution of that partnership. A 586
Burman would not ask, 'Were they married?' but, 779
'Are they man and wife?' And so with divorce, it
is a cessation of the state of marriage.

Elders tell me that women ask for divorce far 586
more than men do. 'Men have patience, and women 562
have not,' that is what they say. For every little 157
quarrel a woman will want a divorce. 'Thakin,
if we were to grant divorces every time a woman
came and demanded it, we should be doing nothing
else all day long. If a husband comes home to
find dinner not cooked, and speaks angrily, his wife
will rush to us in tears for a divorce. If he speaks
to another woman and smiles, if he does not give
his wife a new dress, if he be fond of going out
in the evening, all these are reasons for a breathless
demand for a divorce. The wives get cross and
run to us and cry, "My husband has been angry
with me. Never will I live with him again. Give
me a divorce." Or, "See my clothes, how old they
are. I cannot buy any new dress. I will have a
divorce." And we say, "Yes, yes; it is very sad.
Of course, you must have a divorce; but we cannot
give you one to-night. Go away, and come again
in three days or in four days, when we have more
time." And they go away, thakin, and they do
not return. Next day it is all forgotten. You
see, they don't know what they want; they turn
with the wind—they have no patience.'

Sometimes they repent too late. Here is another 586
of my memories about divorce: 573

There was a man and his wife, cultivators, living in a small village. The land that he cultivated

571 and trying to improve them; as a nation we try to coerce weaker nations and to convert stronger ones, and as individuals we do the same. We are sure that other people cannot but be better and happier for being brought into our ways of thinking, by force even, if necessary. We call it philanthropy.

571
609
[779] But the Buddhist does not believe this at all. Each man, each nation has, he thinks, enough to do managing his or its own affairs. Interference, any sort of interference, he is sure can do nothing but harm. *You* cannot save a man. He can save himself; you can do nothing for him. You may force or persuade him into an outer agreement with you, but what is the value of that? All dispositions that are good, that are of any value at all, must come spontaneously from the heart of man. First, he must desire them, and then struggle to obtain them; by this means alone can any virtue be reached. This, which is the key of his religion, is the key also of his private life. Each man is a free man to do what he likes, in a way that we have never understood.

Even under the rule of the Burmese kings there was the very widest tolerance. You never heard of a foreigner being molested in any way, being forbidden to live as he liked, being forbidden to erect his own places of worship. He had the widest freedom, as long as he infringed no law. The Burmese rule may not have been a good one in many ways, but it was never guilty of persecution, of any attempt at forcible conversion, of any desire to make such an attempt.

This tolerance, this inclination to let each man

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER XIX

'NOBLESSE OBLIGE'

> 'Sooner shall the cleft rock reunite so as to make a whole, than may he who kills any living being be admitted into our society.'—*Acceptance into the Monkhood.*

262
779

It is very noticeable throughout the bazaars of Burma that all the beef butchers are natives of India. No Burman will kill a cow or a bullock, and no Burman will sell its meat. It is otherwise with pork and fowls. Burmans may sometimes be found selling these; and fish are almost invariably sold by the wives of the fishermen. During the king's time, any man who was even found in possession of beef was liable to very severe punishment. The only exception, as I have explained elsewhere, was in the case of the queen when expecting an addition to her family, and it was necessary that she should be strengthened in all ways. None, not even foreigners, were allowed to kill beef, and this law was very stringently observed. Other flesh and fish might, as far as the law of the country went, be sold with impunity. You could not be fined for killing and eating goats, or fowls, or pigs,

262
779

and these were sold occasionally. It is ten years since King Thibaw was overthrown, and there is now no law against the sale of beef. And yet, as I have said, no respectable Burman will even now kill or sell beef. The law was founded on the beliefs of the people, and though the law is dead, the beliefs remain.

231
779

It is true that the taking of life is against Buddhist commands. No life at all may be taken by him who adheres to Buddhistic teaching. Neither for sport, nor for revenge, nor for food, may any animal be deprived of the breath that is in it. And this is a command wonderfully well kept. There are a few exceptions, but they are known and accepted as breaches of the law, for the law itself knows no exceptions. Fish, as I have said, can be obtained almost everywhere. They are caught in great quantities in the river, and are sold in most bazaars, either fresh or salted. It is one of the staple foods of the Burmese. But although they will eat fish, they despise the fisherman. Not so much, perhaps, as if he killed other living things, but still, the fisherman is an outcast from decent society. He will have to suffer great and terrible punishment before he can be cleansed from the sins that he daily commits. Notwithstanding this, there are many fishermen in Burma.

[463]
[554]

A fish is a very cold-blooded beast. One must be very hard up for something to love to have any affection to spare upon fishes. They cannot be, or at all events they never are, domesticated, and most of them are not beautiful. I am not aware that they have ever been known to display any

16;Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779
231

attachment to anyone, which accounts, perhaps, for the comparatively lenient eye with which their destruction is contemplated.

For with warm-blooded animals it is very different. Cattle, as I have said, can never be killed nor their meat sold by a Burman, and with other animals the difficulty is not much less.

I was in Upper Burma for some months before the war, and many a time I could get no meat at all. Living in a large town among prosperous people, I could get no flesh at all, only fish and rice and vegetables. When, after much trouble, my Indian cook would get me a few fowls, he would often be waylaid and forced to release them. An old woman, say, anxious to do some deed of merit, would come to him as he returned triumphantly home with his fowls and tender him money, and beg him to release the fowls. She would give the full price or double the price of the fowls; she had no desire to gain merit at another person's expense, and the unwilling cook would be obliged to give up the fowls. Public opinion was so strong he dare not refuse. The money was paid, the fowls set free, and I dined on tinned beef.

And yet the villages are full of fowls. Why they are kept I do not know. Certainly not for food. I do not mean to say that an accidental meeting between a rock and a fowl may not occasionally furnish forth a dinner, but this is not the object with which they are kept—of this I am sure.

You would not suppose that fowls were capable of exciting much affection, yet I suppose they are. Certainly in one case ducks were. There is a

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779
231

Burman lady I know who is married to an Englishman. He kept ducks. He bought a number of ducklings, and had them fed up so that they might be fat and succulent when the time came for them to be served at table. They became very fine ducks, and my friend had promised me one. I took an interest in them, and always noticed their increasing fatness when I rode that way. Imagine, then, my disappointment when one day I saw that all the ducks had disappeared.

I stopped to inquire. Yes, truly they were all gone, my friend told me. In his absence his wife had gone up the river to visit some friends, and had taken the ducks with her. She could not bear, she said, that they should be killed, so she took them away and distributed them among her friends, one here and one there, where she was sure they would be well treated and not killed. When she returned she was quite pleased at her success, and laughed at her husband and me.

This same lady was always terribly distressed when she had to order a fowl to be killed for her husband's breakfast, even if she had never seen it before. I have seen her, after telling the cook to kill a fowl for breakfast, run away and sit down in the veranda with her hands over her ears, and her face the very picture of misery, fearing lest she should hear its shrieks. I think that this was the one great trouble to her in her marriage, that her husband would insist on eating fowls and ducks, and that she had to order them to be killed.

And as she is, so are most Burmans. If there is all this trouble about fowls, it can be imagined

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

how the trouble increases when it comes to goats or any larger beasts. In the jungle villages meat of any kind at all is never seen: no animals of any kind are allowed to be killed. An officer travelling in the district would be reduced to what he could carry with him, if it were not for an Act of Government obliging villages to furnish—on payment, of course — supplies for officers and troops passing through. The mere fact of such a law being necessary is sufficient proof of the strength of the feeling against taking life. 779 ● 231 [262]

Of course, all shooting, either for sport or for food, is looked upon as disgraceful. In many jungle villages where deer abound there are one or two hunters who make a living by hunting. But they are disgraced men. They are worse than fishermen, and they will have a terrible penalty to pay for it all. It will take much suffering to wash from their souls the cruelty, the blood-thirstiness, the carelessness to suffering, the absence of compassion, that hunting must produce. 'Is there no food in the bazaar, that you must go and take the lives of animals?' has been said to me many a time. And when my house-roof was infested by sparrows, who dropped grass and eggs all over my rooms, so that I was obliged to shoot them with a little rifle, this was no excuse. 'You should have built a sparrow-cote,' they told me. 'If you had built a sparrow-cote, they would have gone away and left you in peace. They only wanted to make nests and lay eggs and have little ones, and you went and shot them.' There are many sparrow-cotes to be seen in the villages. 779 224 825

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779
825
I might give example after example of this sort, for they happen every day. We who are meat-eaters, who delight in shooting, who have a horror of insects and reptiles, are continually coming into collision with the principles of our neighbours; for even harmful reptiles they do not care to kill. Truly I believe it is a myth, the story of the Burmese mother courteously escorting out of the house the scorpion which had just bitten her baby. A Burmese mother worships her baby as much as the woman of any other nation does, and I believe there is no crime she would not commit in its behalf. But if she saw a scorpion walking about in the fields, she would not kill it as we should. She would step aside and pass on. 'Poor beast!' she would say, 'why should I hurt it? It never hurt me.'

The Burman never kills insects out of sheer brutality. If a beetle drone annoyingly, he will catch it in a handkerchief and put it outside, and so with a bee. It is a great trouble often to get your Burmese servants to keep your house free of ants and other annoying creatures. If you tell them to kill the insects they will, for in that case the sin falls on you. Without special orders they would rather leave the ants alone.

136
825
In the district in which I am now living snakes are very plentiful. There are cobras and keraits, but the most dreaded is the Russell's viper. He is a snake that averages from three to four feet long, and is very thick, with a big head and a stumpy tail. His body is marked very prettily with spots and blurs of light on a dark, grayish green, and he

925
779

is amongst the Burmese. It is an abiding principle of their daily life.

Where the command came from I do not know. I cannot find any allusion to it in the life of the great teacher. We know that he ate meat. It seems to me that it is older even than he. It has been derived both by the Burmese Buddhists and the Hindus from a faith whose origin is hidden in the mists of long ago. It is part of that far older faith on which Buddhism was built, as was Christianity on Judaism.

But if not part of his teaching—and though it is included in the sacred books, we do not know how much of them are derived from the Buddha himself — it is in strict accordance with all his teaching. That is one of the most wonderful points of Buddhism, it is all in accordance; there are no exceptions.

I have heard amongst Europeans a very curious explanation of this refusal of Buddhists to take life. 'Buddhists,' they say, 'believe in the transmigration of souls. They believe that when a man dies his soul may go into a beast. You could not expect him to kill a bull, when perchance his grandfather's soul might inhabit there.' This is their explanation, this is the way they put two and two together to make five. They know that Buddhists believe in transmigration, they know that Buddhists do not like to take life, and therefore one is the cause of the other.

I have mentioned this explanation to Burmans while talking of the subject, and they have always laughed at it. They had never heard of it before.

825 It is true that it is part of their great theory of life
779 that the souls of men have risen from being souls of
beasts, and that we may so relapse if we are not
825 careful. Many stories are told of cases that have
775 occurred where a man has been reincarnated as an
animal, and where what is now the soul of a man used to live in a beast. But that makes no difference. Whatever a man may have been, or may be, he is a man now; whatever a beast may have been, he is a beast now. Never suppose that a Burman has any other idea than this. To him men are men, and animals are animals, and men are far the higher. But he does not deduce from this that man's superiority gives him permission to illtreat or to kill animals. It is just the reverse. It is because man is so much higher than the animal that he can and must observe towards animals the very greatest care, feel for them the very greatest compassion, be good to them in every way he can. The Burman's motto should be *Noblesse oblige;* he knows the meaning, if he knows not the words.

825 For the Burman's compassion towards animals
101 goes very much farther than a mere reluctance to
kill them. Although he has no command on the subject, it seems to him quite as important to treat animals well during their lives as to refrain from taking those lives. His refusal to take life he shares with the Hindu; his perpetual care and tenderness to all living creatures is all his own. And here I may mention a very curious contrast, that whereas in India the Hindu will not take life and the Mussulman will, yet the Mussulman is by reputation far kinder to his beasts than the Hindu. Here the

ing, seated under a fig-tree. She came up to the Buddha, and told him of her losses, and how she had no one left; and she demanded of the Buddha that he should restore to her those that she had lost. And the Buddha had great compassion upon her, and tried to console her. 539

'All die,' he said; 'it comes to everyone, king and peasant, animal and man. Only through many deaths can we obtain the Great Peace. All this sorrow,' he said, 'is of the earth. All this is passion which we must get rid of, and forget before we reach heaven. Be comforted, my daughter, and turn to the holy life. All suffer as you do. It is part of our very existence here, sorrow and trouble without any end.' 539 779 ● 761

But she would not be comforted, but demanded her dead of the Buddha. Then, because he saw it was no use talking to her, that her ears were deaf with grief, and her eyes blinded with tears, he said to her that he would restore to her those who were dead.

'You must go,' he said, 'my daughter, and get some mustard-seed, a pinch of mustard-seed, and I can bring back their lives. Only you must get this seed from the garden of him near whom death has never come. Get this, and all will be well.'

So the woman went forth with a light heart. It was so simple, only a pinch of mustard-seed, and mustard grew in every garden. She would get the seed and be back very quickly, and then the Lord Buddha would give her back those she loved who had died. She clothed herself again and tied up her hair, and went cheerfully and asked at the first

539 771 761 house, 'Give me a pinch of mustard-seed,' and it was given readily. So with her treasure in her hand she was going forth back to the Buddha full of delight, when she remembered.

'Has ever anyone died in your household?' she asked, looking round wistfully.

The man answered 'Yes,' that death had been with them but recently. Who could this woman be, he thought, to ask such a question? And the woman went forth, the seed dropping from her careless fingers, for it was of no value. So she would try again and again, but it was always the same. Death had taken his tribute from all. Father or mother, son or brother, daughter or wife, there was always a gap somewhere, a vacant place beside the meal. From house to house throughout the city she went, till at last the new hope faded away, and she learned from the world, what she had not believed from the Buddha, that death and life are one.

[772] So she returned, and she became a nun, poor soul! taking on her the two hundred and twenty-seven vows, which are so hard to keep that nowadays nuns keep but five of them.[1]

● 779 761 This is the teaching of the Buddha, that death is inevitable; this is the consolation he offers, that all men must know death; no one can escape death;

---

[772] [1] These five vows are:

1. Not to take life.
2. To be honest.
3. To tell the truth.
4. To abstain from intoxicants.
5. Chastity.

779
761

no one can escape the sorrow of the death of those whom he loves. Death, he says, and life are one; not antagonistic, but the same; and the only way to escape from one is to escape from the other too. Only in the Great Peace, when we have found refuge from the passion and tumult of life, shall we find the place where death cannot come. Life and death are one.

This is the teaching of the Buddha, repeated over and over again to his disciples when they sorrowed for the death of Thariputra, when they were in despair at the swift-approaching end of the great teacher himself. Hear what he says to Ananda, the beloved disciple, who is mourning over Thariputra.

'Ananda,' he said, 'often and often have I sought to bring shelter to your soul from the misery caused by such grief as this. There are two things alone that can separate us from father and mother, from brother and sister, from all those who are most cherished by us, and those two things are distance and death. Think not that I, though the Buddha, have not felt all this even as any other of you; was I not alone when I was seeking for wisdom in the wilderness?

'And yet what would I have gained by wailing and lamenting either for myself or for others? Would it have brought to me any solace from my loneliness? would it have been any help to those whom I had left? There is nothing that can happen to us, however terrible, however miserable, that can justify tears and lamentations and make them aught but a weakness.'

And so, we are told, in this way the Buddha

779
761

soothed the affliction of Ananda, and filled his soul with consolation—the consolation of resignation.

For there is no other consolation possible but this, resignation to the inevitable, the conviction of the uselessness of sorrow, the vanity and selfishness of grief.

There is no meeting again with the dead. Nowhere in the recurring centuries shall we meet again those whom we have loved, whom we love, who seem to us to be parts of our very soul. That which survives of us, the part which is incarnated again and again, until it be fit for heaven, has nothing to do with love and hate.

Even if in the whirlpool of life our paths should cross again the paths of those whom we have loved, we are never told that we shall know them again and love them.

A friend of mine has just lost his mother, and he is very much distressed. He must have been very fond of her, for although he has a wife and children, and is happy in his family, he is in great sorrow. He proposes even to build a pagoda over her remains, a testimony of respect which in strict Buddhism is reserved to saints. He has been telling me about this, and how he is trying to get a sacred relic to put in the pagoda, and I asked him if he never hoped again to meet the soul of his mother on earth or in heaven, and he answered:

'No. It is very hard, but so are many things, and they have to be borne. Far better it is to face the truth than to escape by a pleasant falsehood. There is a Burmese proverb that tells us that all

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

the world is one vast burial-ground; there are dead 779
men everywhere.' 761

'One of our great men has said the same,' I answered.

He was not surprised.

'As it is true,' he said, 'I suppose all great men would see it.'

Thus there is no escape, no loophole for a delusive hope, only the cultivation of the courage of sorrow.

There are never any exceptions to the laws of 779
the Buddha. If a law is a law, that is the end of 761
it. Just as we know of no exceptions to the law of 772
gravitation, so there are no exceptions to the law of death.

But although this may seem to be a religion of 779
despair, it is not really so. This sorrow to which 761
there is no relief is the selfishness of sorrow, the grief for our own loneliness; for of sorrow, of fear, of pity for the dead, there is no need. We know that in time all will be well with them. We know that, though there may be before them vast periods of suffering, yet that they will all at last be in Nebhan with us. And if we shall not know them there, still we shall know that they are there, all of them—not one will be wanting. Purified from the lust of life, white souls steeped in the Great Peace, all living things will attain rest at last.

There is this remarkable fact in Buddhism, that nowhere is any fear expressed of death itself, nowhere any apprehension of what may happen to the dead. It is the sorrow of separation, the terror of

779
761

death to the survivors, that is always dwelt upon with compassion, and the agony of which it is sought to soothe.

That the dying man himself should require strengthening to face the King of Terrors is hardly ever mentioned. It seems to be taken for granted that men should have courage in themselves to take leave of life becomingly, without undue fears. Buddhism is the way to show us the escape from the miseries of life, not to give us hope in the hour of death.

It is true that to all Orientals death is a less fearful thing than it is to us. I do not know what may be the cause of this, courage certainly has little to do with it; but it is certain that the purely physical fear of death, that horror and utter revulsion that seizes the majority of us at the idea of death, is absent from most Orientals. And yet this cannot explain it all. For fear of death, though less, is still there, is still a strong influence upon their lives, and it would seem that no religion which ignored this great fact could become a great living religion.

Religion is made for man, to fit his necessities, not man for religion, and yet the faith of Buddhism is not concerned with death.

Consider our faith, how much of its teaching consists of how to avoid the fear of death, how much of its consolation is for the death-bed. How we are taught all our lives that we should live so as not to fear death; how we have priests and sacraments to soothe the dying man, and give him hope and courage, and how the crown and summit of our creed is that

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779
761

we should die easily. And consider that in Buddhism all this is absolutely wanting. Buddhism is a creed of life, of conduct; death is the end of that life, that is all.

We have all seen death. We have all of us watched those who, near and dear to us, go away out of our ken. There is no need for me to recall the last hours of those of our faith, to bring up again the fading eye and waning breath, the messages of hope we search for in our Scriptures to give hope to him who is going, the assurances of religion, the cross held before the dying eyes.

Many men, we are told, turn to religion at the last after a life of wickedness, and a man may do so even at the eleventh hour and be saved.

That is part of our belief; that is the strongest part of our belief; and that is the hope that all fervent Christians have, that those they love may be saved even at the end.

I think it may truly be said that our Western creeds are all directed at the hour of death, as the great and final test of that creed.

And now think of Buddhism; it is a creed of life. In life you must win your way to salvation by urgent effort, by suffering, by endurance. On your death-bed you can do nothing. If you have done well, then it is well; if ill, then you must in future life try again and again till you succeed. A life is not washed, a soul is not made fit for the dwelling of eternity, in a moment.

Repentance to a Buddhist is but the opening of the eyes to see the path to righteousness; it has no virtue in itself. To have seen that we are sinners

779
761

is but the first step to cleansing our sin; in itself it cannot purify.

As well ask a robber of the poor to repent, and suppose thereby that those who have suffered from his guilt are compensated for the evil done to them by his repentance, as to ask a Buddhist to believe that a sinner can at the last moment make good to his own soul all the injuries caused to that soul by the wickedness of his life.

Or suppose a man who has destroyed his constitution by excess to be by the very fact of acknowledging that excess restored to health.

The Buddhist will not have that at all. A man is what he makes himself; and that making is a matter of terrible effort, of unceasing endeavour towards the right, of constant suppression of sin, till sin be at last dead within him. If a man has lived a wicked life, he dies a wicked man, and no wicked man can obtain the perfect rest of the sinless dead. Heaven is shut to him. But if heaven is shut it is not shut for ever; if hell may perhaps open to him it is only for a time, only till he is purified and washed from the stain of his sins; and then he can begin again, and have another chance to win heaven. If there is no immediate heaven there is no eternal hell, and in due time all will reach heaven; all will have learnt, through suffering, the wisdom the Buddha has shown to us, that only by a just life can men reach the Great Peace even as he did.

So you see that if Buddhism has none of the consolation for the dying man that Christianity holds out, in the hope of heaven, so it has none of the

779
761

threats and terrors of our faith. There is no fear of an angry Judge—of a Judge who is angry.

And yet when I came to think over the matter, it seemed to me that surely there must be something to calm him in the face of death. If Buddhism does not furnish this consolation, he must go elsewhere for it. And I was not satisfied, because I could find nothing in the sacred books about a man's death, that therefore the creed of the people had ignored it. A living creed must, I was sure, provide for this somehow.

So I went to a friend of mine, a Burman magistrate, and I asked him:

'When a man is dying, what does he try to think of? What do you say to comfort him that his last moments may be peace? The monks do not come, I know.'

'The monks!' he said, shaking his head; 'what could they do?'

I did not know.

'Can you do anything,' I asked, 'to cheer him? Do you speak to him of what may happen after death, of hopes of another life?'

'No one can tell,' said my friend, 'what will happen after death. It depends on a man's life, if he has done good or evil, what his next existence will be, whether he will go a step nearer to the Peace. When the man is dying no monks will come, truly; but an old man, an old friend, father, perhaps, or an elder of the village, and he will talk to the dying man. He will say, "Think of your good deeds; think of all that you have done well in this life. Think of your good deeds."'

779
761

'What is the use of that?' I asked. 'Suppose you think of your good deeds, what then? Will that bring peace?'

And the Burman seemed to think that it would.

'Nothing,' he said, 'was so calming to a man's soul as to think of even one deed he had done well in his life.'

Think of the man dying. The little house built of bamboo and thatch, with an outer veranda, where the friends are sitting, and the inner room, behind a wall of bamboo matting, where the man is lying. A pot of flowers is standing on a shelf on one side, and a few cloths are hung here and there beneath the brown rafters. The sun comes in through little chinks in roof and wall, making curious lights in the semi-darkness of the room, and it is very hot.

From outside come the noises of the village, cries of children playing, grunts of cattle, voices of men and women clearly heard through the still clear air of the afternoon. There is a woman pounding rice near by with a steady thud, thud of the lever, and there is a clink of a loom where a girl is weaving ceaselessly. All these sounds come into the house as if there were no walls at all, but they are unheeded from long custom.

The man lies on a low bed with a fine mat spread under him for bedding. His wife, his grown-up children, his sister, his brother are about him, for the time is short, and death comes very quickly in the East. They talk to him kindly and lovingly, but they read to him no sacred books; they give him no messages from the world to which he is bound; they whisper to him no hopes of heaven.

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779
761

He is tortured with no fears of everlasting hell. Yet life is sweet and death is bitter, and it is hard to go; and as he tosses to and fro in his fever there comes in to him an old friend, the headman of the village perhaps, with a white muslin fillet bound about his kind old head, and he sits beside the dying man and speaks to him.

'Remember,' he says slowly and clearly, 'all those things that you have done well. Think of your good deeds.'

And as the sick man turns wearily, trying to move his thoughts as he is bidden, trying to direct the wheels of memory, the old man helps him to remember.

'Think,' he says, 'of your good deeds, of how you have given charity to the monks, of how you have fed the poor. Remember how you worked and saved to build the little rest-house in the forest where the traveller stays and finds water for his thirst. All these are pleasant things, and men will always be grateful to you. Remember your brother, how you helped him in his need, how you fed him and went security for him till he was able again to secure his own living. You did well to him, surely that is a pleasant thing.'

I do not think it difficult to see how the sick man's face will lighten, how his eyes will brighten at the thoughts that come to him at the old man's words. And he goes on:

'Remember when the squall came up the river and the boat upset when you were crossing here; how it seemed as if no man could live alone in such waves, and yet how you clung to and saved the boy

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779
761
who was with you, swimming through the water that splashed over your head and very nearly drowned you. The boy's father and mother have never forgotten that, and they are even now mourning without in the veranda. It is all due to you that their lives have not been full of misery and despair. Remember their faces when you brought their little son to them saved from death in the great river. Surely that is a pleasant thing. Remember your wife who is now with you; how you have loved her and cherished her, and kept faithful to her before all the world. You have been a good husband to her, and you have honoured her. She loves you, and you have loved her all your long life together. Surely that is a pleasant thing.'

Yes, surely these are pleasant things to have with one at the last. Surely a man will die easier with such memories as these before his eyes, with love in those about him, and the calm of good deeds in his dying heart. If it be a different way of soothing a man's end to those which other nations use, is it the worse for that?

Think of your good deeds. It seems a new idea to me that in doing well in our life we are making for ourselves a pleasant death, because of the memory of those things. And if we have none? or if evil so outnumbered the good deeds as to hide and overwhelm them, what then? His death will be terrible indeed if he cannot in all his days remember one good deed that he has done.

'All a man's life comes before him at the hour of death,' said my informant; 'all, from the earliest memory to the latest breath. Like a whole land-

779
761

scape called by a flash of lightning out of the dark night. It is all there, every bit of it, good and evil, pleasure and pain, sin and righteousness.'

A man cannot escape from his life even in death. In our acts of to-day we are determining what our death will be; if we have lived well, we shall die well; and if not, then not. 'As a man lives so shall he die,' is the teaching of Buddhism as of other creeds.

So what Buddhism has to offer to the dying believer is this, that if he live according to its tenets he will die happily, and that in the life that he will next enter upon he will be less and less troubled by sin, less and less wedded to the lust of life, until sometime, far away, he shall gain the great Deliverance. He shall have perfect Peace, perfect rest, perfect happiness, he and his, in that heaven where his teacher went before him long ago.

And if we should say that this Deliverance from life, this Great Peace, is Death, what matter, if it be indeed Peace?

CHAPTER XXII

THE POTTER'S WHEEL

'Life is like a great whirlpool wherein we are dashed to and fro by our passions.'—*Saying of the Buddha.*

779
761
182
IT is a hard teaching, this of the Buddha about death. It is a teaching that may appeal to the reason, but not to the soul. That when life goes out, this thing which we call 'I' goes out with it, and that love and remembrance are dead for ever.

It is so hard a teaching that in its purity the people cannot believe it. They accept it, but they have added on to it a belief which changes the whole form of it, a belief that is the outcome of that weakness of humanity which insists that death is not and cannot be all.

Though to the strict Buddhist death is the end of all worldly passion, to the Burmese villager that is not so. He cannot grasp, he cannot endure that it should be so, and he has made for himself out of Buddhism a belief that is opposed to all Buddhism in this matter.

775 He believes in the transmigration of souls, in the survival of the 'I.' The teaching that what survives

General Attitudes of the Burmese toward Work.

621
463
554
461

Rank and status in the Burmese Village is determined to a large extent on the basis of occupation - with the factor of wealth where applicable taking precedence over occupation. The highest rank is accorded to the Buddhist monks who exert the ultimate influence. Government officials including the township officers, the THU GYI (headman) and elders, and the schoolmaster occupy the second rank. The large land owners (of this group the rice-mill owners rate highest) rank next. Below these are the tradesmen - the paddy dealers, shop keepers and small holdings farmers who comprise the bulk of the population. Professional artisans such as carpenters, blacksmiths, gold and silver smiths occupy a lower position. However, it is common for the small holdings farmers to practice a secondary occupation such as pottery making.

[226]
[224]
[779]

Fishermen and hunters are looked down on by the rest of the community because they offend Buddhist precepts by taking life. In this class also are those who raise animals (cows, poultry, pigs) for food, smugglers and brewers. Fishermen, particularly those such as U Myaing who operate IN fisheries often become wealthy, but the stigma of the source of this wealth is remembered by the community.

[538]

A story is told of a rich fisherman who came to cover the Shwe Dagon Pagoda in Rangoon with gold plate. Unfortunately, he had sinned so much by taking the lives of fish that he could not see the pagoda. In a rage he returned to his IN to cover its posts with the gold. Because of the stigma attached to fishing those who make their living in this way tend to live together in their own communities. Thus Pathwe, U Myaing's village is primarily a fisherman's community.

175
567
778
461

In the days of the Burmese kings, wealthy men and nobles (THAKIN) would assign people under their command to serve as pagoda slaves. Their names were engraved in stone and their descendants for all eternity assigned to this position. The duties were light - consisting mainly of sweeping the platforms and carrying for the images, but the social position was next to the lowest. It is believed that the flower vendors on the platform of the Rangoon

461

pagodas and those throughout the country are descendants of the 175
pagoda slaves. 567

Beggars are rated below the pagodo slaves - but, because of the 778
Buddhist merit associated with giving do well for themselves. 735
The beggars live in communities on the outskirts of the town often [779] ●
in cemetaries. They are thought to exhume the dead to get the coins 764
placed in the mouth of the deceased to ensure expenses on his journey 554
to heaven. The wood of the coffin is believed to be used in construct- 461
ing their huts. Professional undertakers or morticians are regarded
with horror since they like the beggars, make their living from the
dead. The functions of burial are performed gratis by the entire
village. A story is currently going round the University dormitories [203]
telling of an immensely wealthy Burmese coffin maker in Rangoon who
has offered riches to the young man who will marry his beautiful
daughter. When the future seems blank the students' friend advises
"Hey, why don't you go and marry the coffin maker's daughter?" It
seems that the money would scarcely compensate for the social dis- 461
crimination. The extent to which the occupation classes are rigid in 565
marriage and other social exchanges is an interesting problem. 555

A young man is obliged to remain within the occupation class of
his family or to rise to greater heights. He is advised at an early [867]
age to "be simple, aim high, and tell the truth." When children [857]
play at dacoits (thieves) of other "low class" games their parents
object to their low aspirations and advise them to play nobles and
ministers. One would feel justified in remaining idle rather than
accept a position below that of his birth. It is better to accept
a clerks job at a low salary than an artisans at a high salary. On
the other hand those born into lower status occupation groups tend to be
satisfied with their state as a condition of birth. In Rangoon, however,
even the hawkers may have ambitions to achieve fame and fortune. The
opportunities for social mobility is greater in the towns and cities [369]
but difinitely restricted in the villages. 461

Apprenticeship to trades begins at the age of 12 to 14 years, 467
and usually lasts for several years. Ordinarily the youth is attached 874
to the shop of a relative where he lives and is payed a subsistence [602]
wage while learning. The key to high positions lies in education in

of clothes. The old people take care to save the torn garments for 291
use in wiping the hands after meals, for handling hot pots on the 554
stove and the like. 181

There are three classes of clothing (1) working clothes (2) 291
festive dress, and (3) religious dress. The working clothes consist 292
of the cheaper and less ornate fabrics and are mainly of cotton.
The men usually bind the longyi around the loins by looping the
skirt in a band between the legs. Htamein (women's longyi)
waist band is secured under the armpits when bathing.

While walking in the rain the
longyis are also raised to prevent them from becoming wet. Festive
dress involves the best which one has, usually silks and are worn
on the Sabbath days and at special social occasions as the SHIN BYÁ
and other ceremonies. Religious dress is worn constantly by Pongyis 291
(orange robes), nuns (peach coloured) and frequently by old men 779
(white) and old women (light chocolate coloured). On Sabbath days [575]
the particularly religious individuals of all ages, especially those
belonging to Buddhist lay societies, wear religious dress.

The term LONGYI means "lower apparel" and is applied to both 291
men's (PUSO) and women's (HTAMEIN). The man's festive longyi 292
TAUNG-SHAY-PUSO (taung measurement- twenty-puso) worn frequently
in the past and now reserved for special occasions was a double silk
PUSO 8 yards long. A special method of securing this garment about
the waist results in GABON ZA ("Sticking out piece") a fold which
protrudes 6 or more inches in the midline - only, however, when the
silk is crisp and stiff (new and/or finest heavy quality). This is
regarded as a very manly garment. Two styles of APAW EINGYI (over
jacket) men's jacket are worn. The "Peking" type meeting at the
mid-line is most common. A "Cantonese" type buttons over like the
woman's jacket at the side.

Formerly every young man had tattooed thighs, extending in a 304
solid band of decoration from a few inches above the knees to the 562
hips. The motifs were frequently mat symbols. The main purpose 178
was to display manliness and courage since the process of tatooing,
done with a 3-pronged fork dipped in pigment was extremely painful.

length) draped over one shoulder. The PUNA, part of the scarf, still 792
draped, is placed on front of the worshipping woman for her head and 291
hands as she bows. The beads, a string about 2 feet long made of black 293
lacquer or of red or white beads about ½ inch in diametre are called [788]
SEIK-PA-DEE (count-beads). They are worn about the neck when not in
use, and are "counted" by the fingers of one hand. Each bead, thus
counted calls to the worshipper's mind a vision of Buddha as she says
ARA HAHN (God) in a low voice. While in this dress women do not
decorate their hair with flowers or wear jewelry or cosmetiques as
such would be unseemly.

The older men and other religious men (who are gathering alms as 888
members of Buddhist lay societies) wear a loose white robe over a 779
white jacket, white head band, praying bead necklace, and a chocolate 575
coloured scarf draped over one shoulder. The general public must 291
wear their very best clothes for religious festivals but the women do
not use cosmetiques. "Rangoon Sabbath" is the term applied to the [369]
less strict observations of the town people who may appear with a [779]
little THANAKA or other cosmetiques. The marriage dress of the bride [292]
is an older form of costume involving use of a long split skirt with [585]
out-flaring jackets.

The hair styles are important and denote age and sex. Children 302
of both sexes wear their hair in a knot at the top of the head with 177
a fringe of short hair like a bowl below. The older men's style was 369
long hair knotted on one side in the back of the head; except in villages this has been superceded by the western short crop ranging from a long "Pompedor" to short "crew cuts" - the latter being rarer and more modern. Old men wear very short cropped hair or are shaven - as the Pongyis and nuns. Maidens wear their hair in elaborately woven tresses - earlier on top of the head in a disc-whorl - now in chain braids at the back of the head. False switches of hair are commonly used. Flowers are used as decoration on all occasions. The usual style for married ladies is a knot at the back of the head wound around a rectangular comb of wood, (common) tortoise shell, ivory or gold. Older and married women sometimes appear in an ancient ceremonial style consisting of the hair wrapped around a fiber cylinder

776
796

set aside for the 37 plates, the people are served.

> "The Nat ceremony at the Nat-Kauk IN is for KWIN BAING, the Indian Nat. He is given offerings of chicken, liquor, Htameins, etc. This Nat lives in a tree and he has made this known by possessing someone and speaking through him. After the food is offered to this Nat, the people who gave the offering eat it all up, drink all the liquor and present the Htameins to the aged and elderly. The gold leaf is stuck onto the trunk of the Nat tree, and the black rice is thrown away.
>
> "The person who works his IN for himself alone has to provide for his own offerings. If the IN undertaking is a cooperative one the various members get together to give offerings to the IN nat."

In holding a ceremony for U SHIN GYI there are some items offered which are only just sufficient for his consumption, and for a few other people. Some items of food, however, are prepared in sufficient quantity to feed the whole village.

The items used in the yearly offering to the IN nat KWIN BAING include:- One chicken, one bottle of liquor, jaggery, Rs. 2/8 worth of KAUKHNYIN or black rice and about four condensed milk tins of rice. No Htameins. The nat who likes Htameins is the HSE-DAW-SHIN nat to whom King Anawratha himself is believed to have given offerings.

[173]

Items used in a single ceremony for U Shin Gyi include:- Three condensed milk tins of black rice or KAUKHNYIN @ Rs. 8/-, ten coconuts @ Rc. 1/- each, 50 ticals of LAPHET or Burmese pickled tea @ Rs. 6/- per viss (100 ticals), about 4 or 6 annas worth of betel quid, about three viss of jaggery, costing Rs. 5/-, 8 packets of 10 candles @ 2 annas per packet and flowers just sufficient to place on the altar. Rs. 2/- worth of flowers are bought @ one anna per bundle. The flowers are mainly SEIN CHE (diamond decorated). Some flowers need not be purchased, but can be easily gathered from the trees. THA BYAY (pleasant country) flowers and coconut kernels are also placed on the altar. These kernels are obtained free of charge from the coconut trees.

Buddhism

779

The practices of Buddhism are both a religious duty and a social occasion for the family. The difficulty of separating the everyday "secular" activities from the supernatural will be especially apparent in the passages below.

phongyis have to draw lots for these.

There are thirty days during which the KAHTEIN ceremony can be held - from the full moon of Thadingyut to the full moon of Tasaungmon When the phongyis have been given HSOON, the ceremony is over. But preparations have to be made four or five days ahead for building the equippment, for cooking the food, for rehearsing the play to be put up by the youngmen, etc.

The Tagu month festival is a religious festival and is celebrated in their village at the HSU TAUNG PYE pagoda. Collections are taken, and people donate from Rs. 2/- or Rs. 5/- right up to Rs. 300/- each. A ZAT troupe is engaged for the occasion, and they are paid at the rate of Rs. 150/- or Rs. 200/- a night for six or seven nights. This festival takes place on the full moon of the month of Tagu. Beginning from the eve of the full moon, people start coming to the pagoda bringing gifts of fruit, PAUK PAUK HSOTE trifle, toffees, bread, cheroots, betel boxes GYIN THOKE trifle, etc., and these people have to be fed too. U Myaing donated between forty and sixty rupees; while people who are rich donate between three hundred and four hundred rupees. (U Myaing's village of Pathwe is divided by a fork in the river into three sub-villages, and when collections are taken they are only confined to one's own side of the river.) Enough food is prepared to feed three or four thousand people. Butter is bought by the kerosene tin, ripe bananas, fried fish, pork, etd., and the guests are fed till everyone is satisfied. About twenty baskets of rice have to be boiled by about forty to fifty people.

The guests are fed in three rest houses, each holding fifty people at a time. Even so, there are so many guests that some people have to return home without having eaten anything at all, and even though a lot of food still remain. The guests who come are both Karens and Burmans, and when they come they sometimes bring along cows or horses which have decorations and gifts hung on them. Anyone who so desires can go and hang his gift on to the animal as well.

Everyone contributes his or her labour. It is not good to hold back. When there is a festival or a ceremony in the KYAUNG, all the families lock up their houses and go over to help. Even fish coming down to the IN are not picked up til the festival is over. Everyone helps in getting up festivals. Burmans and Karens all come to help at some household which intends to give charity on a grand scale.

U Myaing's Shifting Relationship to Buddhism

In an interview U Myaing was questioned as to his relationship to Buddhism as a "taker of lives" (fishermen). His sense of guilt in Pantanaw where he fished and relief from this in the camp is given below verbatim from the interview.

42. Q. Would you tell U Myaing that I as a foreigner understand very little about Buddhism but I've heard that the fishermen who take lives of the fish are regarded unfavourably. Ask him if this is true.

A. (U.M.) There are the 5 KAMS (commandments - Pali: KAMMA - to do). Thou shalt not take the life of others. Thou shalt not wrong the wife and off-spring of another. Abstain from intoxicants and from stealing the property of others. We have to observe these. The Buddha has preached it.

Q. Isn't U Myaing, in working the IN, taking the lives of the fish?

A. Yes, I am taking the lives of the fish. I haveto do it to get food - to make a living.

Q. But you do not wish to take life?

A. No. And even though I kill, I give charities. "If your work demerit, perform meritorious acts" so preached Buddha. We took life there, and we gave charities then, so it seemed that the demerit couldn't be very great. As the saying goes, "A tical of merit for a viss of demerit." We are asked to do a TABETHA (viss) worth of meritorious acts.

Q. What kinds of charities and offerings did U Myaing give in Pantanaw?

A. TAZAUNG (prayer platform), pagoda. I built a pagoda - a ZEDI.

Q. Did U Myaing erect this pagoda (spire) personally or in conjunction with others.

A. I built it alone. All of us including my parents. I built it with the money I got.

Q. Was it built by your family as a whole?

A. It was with the money received by the seven of us - the money I own.

Q. How much did this cost to erect?

A. Rs. 1,400/- and slightly above.

46. Q. How much merit did U Myaing get? Can he measure the merit?

A. We cannot know. People say that it will do you good in some future existence, that is why you give charities.

47. Q. Is U Myaing able to observe many of the Buddhist rites here in Rangoon, could you compare the religious life around Pantanaw with that around here?

A. We can give little charities here because we have very little. There we could give much because we had lots of money. Here, besides food we can give only a little, such as flowers, etc.

48. Q. Is U Myaing unhappy because he is unable to give the things that he would like to now?

A. Yes. I observe the UBOT-NE (holy day) during the Wa (rains; the Buddhist lent coincides with the months of the rainy season) and I am not fully and completely equipped. There I could observe the holy day fully equipped. Here, since I cannot do so, I feel unhappy and neither would I get much merit.

Q. When you say "fully and completely equipped", what do you mean? With what things are you unequipped?

A. Offerings and charities. When we ascend the pagoda, we need flowers to offer and money to donate. We cannot donate because we don't have sufficient money. We canno offer charities.

49. Q. Does the fact that U Myaing does not feel happy about his present situation indicate that he feels that he should be gaining more merit?

A. We cannot do much merit now. And the demerit now is also not great.

Q. So it is the same as in Partanaw?

Yes. The same as in Pantanaw. In Pantanaw the merit was great and the demerit was great. Here the merit is no great, and the demerit also is not great. It is just the same.

The whole family goes to the Karen ANYEIN or marionette shows which are quite rare and sometimes not even seen in a year. If it is held, it is held during the months of TAGU, KASON and TAZAUNGMON. In the villages an ANYEIN gives over at about one or two in the morning. 536

The people from their village also go over to Karen villages when they have puppet shows at cremation ceremonies. Some of the Karens bury their dead and after three or four years they exhume the corpse to burn the bones and store the ashes away. At the ceremony for the cremation of the bones they stage these puppet shows and the members of U Myaing's family go to witness them. 536 764

In Pathwe the PYAZAT (stage performance or PWE) has not yet made an appearance. Ma Aye Myaing had seen it in another village where she had to pay an admission charge of four annas. This was the only time she had seen it. On that occasion the show was followed by an enactment of one of the birth stories of Buddha and this went on till morning. 536 [779]●

CHILDREN'S GAMES:

The children used to play several games. One of these was to blind-fold one of their number and set him off in the direction of an iron bar suspended about 25 yards away. The blindfolded boy was given an iron rod and it was his task to try and hit the suspended bar with his rod. 524 857

These games were played at a sports meeting organized for children and everyone in the village turned out to watch. Another item was the candle race where the children were given a lighted candle each and made to run a race. Then there was a cock fighting contest where two girls sat back on their haunches, faced each other and began to swing each knee forward alternatively until one or the other gave up. There was also a needle and thread race, a sack race, a one-legged race and an egg and spoon race. Each of these races were confined to only two contestants at a time. [621]

GONYIN:- A GONYIN is the large flat seed and is used in a game that Burmese children play - U Myaing's children included. There have to be ten players, five a side and each side has to try and hit the seeds belonging to the opposing group according to complicated rules.

In Pathwe the children used to play marbles and not the youths as is sometimes found in Rangoon. In Pathwe the adults were all [369]

181 first a bewildered refugee, but gradually assumed the role of a
565 labourer rising in the ranks. The case indicates the mobility of the
555 Burmese family and shows clearly that it may function successfully out-
side of the confines of its original social atmosphere.

182 The family in Burmese society: The successful mobility of
594 U Myaing's family indicate that the immediate family is the primary
621 social unit of Burmese society. The Burmese community is then a
156 congregation of immediate families who engage in activities of mutual
benefit within the protective framework of the village structure.
This interpretation high lights a particular type of individualism
which is a family individualism depending on the roles of each
●[779] member of the family for its full expression. This concept seems tied
to the Buddhist idea of individual salvation through acts of merit on
the one hand and the exigencies of gaining a livelihood on the other.
[474] The family is the basic economic unit and though it will enter
cooperative endeavours (like the IN fisheries, or communal nat propi-
tiations), has the ultimate responsibility and capabilities of support-
[596] ing itself. The extended family is important, as indeed is the total
village social structure, only in so far as it contributes to the
maintenance of the individual immediate family of procreation including
spouses, offspring and aged parents. The "looseness" of the social
structure conversely allows mobility of the immediate families. This
analysis indicates that attempts at modernizing of the Burmese people
(acculturation) should meet with a minimum of structural obstacles -
such as caste, clan and rigid associations might present.

181 The Burmese culture pattern and the individual: The village culture
156 pattern is dominated by a series of relatively simple, interrelated
369 ideas held by all. Each individual feels himself temporily occupying a
555 particular situation which is only one of many existences and but an
instant in eternity. He is fated to be a member of a particular family
with a set of opportunities through life. Life should be pleasant and
must be virtuous if future existences are to be pleasant. He must
realize as fully as possible the talents and opportunities that come
to him through his KARMA situation. In the villages this concept is a
great stabilizing force and tends to make an individual content with

21: Htin Aung
773, 779●

APl Burma
Burmese AP4

[For folk mythology and Buddhist mythology and for incidents and characters therefrom in Burmese literature and drama, see category 116, pp. 1-149.]

175 it, carrying on trade with India and the rest of Indo-China. During
this period Burmese dancing and music and poetry, as embodied in
songs, perhaps assumed definite and national forms. But there was
177 no writing. The kings that came from India probably knew writing,
175 but their knowledge was perhaps limited; in any case, it never
212 reached the people. The introduction of Buddhism into the country
brought no writing, as it came through traders whose knowledge
of religious learning was meagre. The few religious tracts preserved in
monasteries were looked upon merely as curious and sacred objects.
The religion, feeble from the beginning, decayed and soon dis-
appeared. The kingdom came to an end in the first century A.D.[1]

175 A new kingdom was founded in Upper Burma at Pagan, which
779 controlled the land and river trade-routes, and as a result of its
212 commercial advantages, it became a powerful kingdom with the
ascension to the throne of Anawrahta in 1044. From that point
Burmese history ceases to be conjectural. Through the influence of
the learned and saintly monk, Shin Arahan, Buddhism in one of its
purest forms was introduced into the kingdom by Anawrahta. With
it, writing was also introduced. The alphabet was the 'Square Pali',
and the literature the *Three Pitakas* embodying all the religious
101 teachings in Pali. Curiously enough, the alphabet and the literature
174 did not come directly from India, but from Burma itself—from the
144 Talaing kingdom of Thaton. The Talaings were a branch of the
Burmese race. Many think that they were a mixture of native tribes
with Indian traders. I venture to disagree. The earliest inhabitants of
Burma were Indonesians, who settled on the coast of Burma during
successive 'drifts' of humanity from the west, through India, to further
east. Later, there was an infiltration of Mongolian tribes, who came
down the rivers from the North. Inland, where the Indonesian element
was weak, the new-comers dominated and later became the Burmese;
along the coast where the Indonesian element was strong the tribes
united and became the Talaings. However, all this is mere con-
175 jecture. The early history of the Talaing kingdom of Thaton, which
101 Anawrahta had to destroy to obtain possession of the alphabet and
the *Three Pitakas*, is not known, except that it was perhaps in
existence a few centuries before Christ and was under the influence

---

[114] [1] Pe Maung Tin and G. H. Luce, *The Glass Palace Chronicle*; A. Phayre, *History of Burma*. G. E. Harvey in his *History of Burma* contends that the first Burmese kingdom was Prome, and that it flourished only in about the seventh century A.D.

of Hindu traders from South India. After the introduction of 175
Buddhism into South India by Asoka in 261 B.C., the traders began 101
to bring Buddhist elements to Thaton. With the establishment in [779]
the third or fourth century after Christ of the Hindu kingdoms in
Java and Sumatra, Thaton became an important trading centre, and [177]
with the rise of a great Buddhist centre at Conjeveram in Madras in
the fifth century, the Talaings began to receive religious writings in
Pali. From that time onwards, learning was definitely established in
the kingdom, and, as a result, a Talaing literature came into being.
Anawrahta was interested in Pali only, and therefore when he
destroyed the city, he burnt all the manuscripts except those in Pali.[1]

The writing and learning that were thus introduced into Pagan 175
took root at once. Prose and poetry as embodied in the language of 212
the court and in songs had been in existence long before, though 779
unwritten, and now the new learning turned them into written forms 538
and began to develop them. Pali was studied everywhere, and in the newly-built temples with their crowded monastic life, works in Pali on religion, on Pali grammar and prosody, and on the legal code of Manu came to be produced.[2] Translations were also made, and soon Pagan became famous throughout India for its Pali scholarship. But

---

[1] The Burmese language belongs to the Tibeto-Burmese group, whereas [197]
the Talaing belongs to the Mon-Khmer group. In spite of Anawrahta's con- [101]
quest and in spite of the fact that racially they were cousins, the Talaings became completely merged with the Burmese only in the eighteenth century. The probability of the Sanskrit drama reaching the Talaings is considered in chap. ii.

[2] G. E. Harvey, op. cit., pp. 59, 70.

The most famous for literary activity was the *Kyauku Ohmmin* temple. Though built perhaps even before Anawrahta, when a corrupted form of Buddhism was prevalent, it is still in an excellent condition (Harvey, p. 17).

The code of Manu was compiled originally in Sanskrit, during the period [671]
200 B.C.–A.D. 200. Since that time it has been one of the chief sources of Hindu law (J. D. Mayne, *Hindu Law*). The Burmese received it in a Talaing-Pali version in which the sacerdotal element had been done away with. That explains why, although Manu is one of the chief sources also of Burmese Buddhist law, it has little in common with Hindu law. The existence of the code as the chief source of Talaing law (Harvey, op. cit., p. 111) raises again the question, how far were the Talaing writings under the influence of Sanskrit and its literature? We shall never know. When Anawrahta destroyed Talaing institutions and historical and literary works, he intended that all knowledge of the past greatness of the Talaings should pass into oblivion so as to smooth his way towards unifying Burma into one single State.

Pali has been, since 1044, the classical language of Burma. [198]

in spite of its greatness in other directions, from being a great period 172
of Burmese literature. The love of beauty, which is the basis of all 175
literature, had adequate satisfaction in the developed art of architec- 538
ture. The poets of Pagan wrote their poems in bricks, instead of 341
words, and their pagodas are still famous. When one stands on the
shore of the Irrawaddy and looks towards the ruins of Pagan, one is
reminded of the delicate beauty of an incomplete poem.[1]

Pagan fell in 1287 as the result of the Tartar onslaught during 175
the time of Kubla Khan, the Scourge of God, and the country broke 779 ●
up into several little States, each attempting to control the others. For 178
the next fifty years, political struggles went on in the capitals, but 538
they failed to disturb the peace of smaller towns and villages. Many
who had grown tired of the strife around the thrones flocked to the [369]
quiet of the village monasteries in order to find peace. Religion went
on undiminished, but the learning connected with it decayed, for the
royal patronage was lacking. Architecture also decayed because there
was no royal support and because the country had become poor. Men
turned to literature for its own sake, and during this period Burmese
prose and poetry assumed definite forms with fully developed diction,
rhythm, rhyme and style.[2]

---

[1] Many temples and pagodas of the Pagan period are in an excellent state 175
of preservation and are still in use as places of worship. Scott O'Conner's 172
Mandalay and Other Cities contains fine illustrations of the more famous of 779
these religious buildings.

The achievement of the Pagan kings, the 'Temple Builders', is summed 643
up by Harvey thus: 'The legacy of their fleeting sway has enriched posterity for ever. It was they who made the sun-scorched wilderness, the solitary plain of Myingyan, to blossom forth into the architectural magnificence of Pagan. If they produced no nation-builder like Simon de Montfort, no lawgiver like Edward I, they unified Burma for more than two centuries, and that in itself was an achievement. But their role was æsthetic and religious rather than political. To them the world owes in great measure the preservation of Theravada Buddhism, one of the purest faiths mankind has ever known. Brahminism had strangled it in the land of its birth; in Ceylon its existence was threatened again and again; east of Burma it was not yet free from priestly corruptions; but the kings of Burma never wavered, and at Pagan the stricken faith found a city of refuge. Vainglorious tyrants built themselves lasting sepulchres, but none of these men has a tomb. . . . These men's magnificence went to glorify their religion, not to deck the tent wherein they camped during this transitory life.'—*History of Burma*, p. 70.

[2] Ibid., p. 103. Since that time, prose and poetry show continuous deve- [114]
lopment. The full history of Burmese literature still remains unwritten. [538]
However, the *Anthology of Burmese Literature*, a Government publication, [178]

So the worship of the nats lived on, and with the advance o

795 535 civilization the spirit dances became elaborate, for though the belief was primitive, the people were no longer so. The dances benefited from the developments that had taken place in Burmese music which, as we have seen, flourished under the patronage of the Pagan kings. New spirits were added, and they were usually those of heroic princes. The dancers were now many, for the mediums turned themselves into dancing and music mistresses. The chief medium of each spirit dressed herself in the special dress of the spirit, but the junior mediums, who were equivalent to the chorus of an English revue, were in the dress of Burmese princesses. It is interesting to note the [292] origin of this dress. The mediums realized the necessity of dressing [565] themselves in fine raiment, but as everybody wore clothes of bright colours, the only solution of the problem was to don the dress of the court and official class, which the commoners were forbidden to [536] wear by law, except during feasts and dances. When drama proper came into being, the hero and the heroine dressed themselves in the court dress, even when they were representing common characters.

3. Miracles and Interludes

175 369 726 779 538 After the fall of the kingdom of Pagan in A.D. 1257, Burma was the scene of fierce civil wars, but the trouble was mainly in the capitals; in the villages and small towns life went on in its joyous way. Religion continued to spread in spite of the fact that the throne of Pagan was no longer in existence to support it. Learning began to reach the remotest parts of the country, carried far and near by monks. To escape from the aimless strife of the civil wars, men turned towards literature. Money was lacking to compose poems in brick as had been done at Pagan, and men now expressed their love for the religion and their love for the beautiful in writing. The new literature further educated the people and made even stronger the already strong religious fervour. As a result, at village feasts and on days of public rejoicing, the people turned towards their religion for amusement and entertainment. So pageants depicting scenes from the life of the Buddha and from his Birth Stories came into being.

796 541 493 Pageants were given on ordinary carts that were in use for all kinds of transport and which are still in use in backward parts of the country at the present day. Each cart carried a group of (amateur) actors standing still and representing a set scene. Originally, no doubt, there were only a few carts representing scenes from different stories. Later, a pageant came to consist of many carts and many

subject of the English morality plays. Again and again we find 536* 744
writers writing and actors saying in the prologue or epilogue that a play represents but life in its various stages; as man begins in laughter and ends in misery and death, a play begins with the happiness of the hero and heroine, and then goes on to tell of their misery and parting. To the conservative Burmese Buddhist, professional acting was a sin, [779] ●
and to get over the difficulty, the idea came into being that the play was only a species of preaching the religion. The existence of that idea perhaps supports my theory that there actually were plays dealing with morals which would favour the rise of such an idea. Perhaps the strongest evidence that there was a morality stage in the history of the development of Burmese drama is the existence of a popular play which has never been printed, but which is still sometimes acted. The play has no title. A rich miser marries a young wife and soon dies. The wife at once remarries. The miser now in Hell sues the wife and the new husband before the court of the governor of Hell, for the restitution of the property he had so patiently gathered and hoarded. There is a trial, and after hearing the arguments of both sides, the judge decides in favour of the young couple. The play ends with the judge moralizing on the emptiness and transitory nature of human riches. The play is quite crude and short, so that when presented today the actors have to lengthen the play to make it last the night. There is very little action, and the king of later dramas is absent. The names of the characters are general and abstract; Mister Miserly, Mistress Wife, Master New Husband, and Death (who takes the old husband to Hell).

The interlude was extremely popular, and at the court, at the houses 536*
of officials (the Burmese had no hereditary nobility, and the officials [565]
were the nobles) and at public feasts and festivals the interlude was presented. The importance of the interlude in the development of Burmese drama is great, but the importance of the professional actors who first presented the interlude in the development of the acting profession and stage conventions is even greater. The fact that the [554]
original members of the profession were outside the social pale caused all actors and actresses to be looked down upon; that fact explains why in an essentially democratic society it was said with contempt that 'beggars and actors, they are the eaters of food thrown away as waste'.[1] [538]

---

[1] The stage conventions and the acting profession are described in detail in chap. vii.

XL: Htin Aung B-5 (ca. 1930) 1937 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER III

U KYIN U

1. The Further History of the Interlude

When U Kyin U started writing his plays, he was not turning the interlude into a real play. The work had been done before him. It is impossible to determine, however, at what precise point the interlude became a proper play; at what time the dancer-actors ceased to give a play as a side-issue in the midst of their main entertainment of dancing and singing. The interlude, on being influenced by the court plays, became longer and more elaborate, and gradually the interlude ceased to be an interlude and came to be the main entertainment given by the professional dancer-actors. In fact, dancing and singing became less and less important until they disappeared from the play. In U Kyin U's plays, we find no dances, and only in *Daywagonban* do we find some songs. The interlude was further developed by becoming closely connected again with the *Jatakas*. 536 * 178 779 ●

We have seen how the interlude came into being, how it borrowed freely from the *Nibhatkhin* based on a Buddhist Birth Story, and how it was influenced and developed by the *Rama* play and the Burmese court plays. From the beginning the interlude was not fully religious, though the stories were *Jataka* stories and there was some undercurrent of religious teaching; nor was it fully secular. The court plays secularized the drama in that stories unconnected with the *Jatakas* were introduced. There was still some religious atmosphere in *Rama* because the play was taken to be founded entirely on a *Jataka*, but other court plays had no reference, direct or otherwise, to the religion. The interlude, on being influenced by the court plays, broke up its connexion with the *Jataka* stories. However, it soon went back to the Birth Stories for inspiration. There were many reasons for that return. The prejudice against secular dancing and acting as being sinful still remained strong, and the only way to overcome it was to retain the idea that the interlude preached the religion in some ways. The more common occasions for the presentation

536* of the interlude were religious feast days, and out of respect for those
●779 occasions, the story had to be religious. Moreover, the interlude had
to contend with the *Hawsa* or dramatic recitation by one person of a
178 story, which was a rival in popularity; and all *Hawsas* were based on
[538] religious stories. However, the most important reason why the
interlude had to depend again on the *Jatakas* for its stories was the
great popularity of the works of U Awbatha.

538 Shin U Awbatha was a monk who lived during the reigns of
178 Bodawpaya (1782–1819) and Bagyidaw (1819–37). He was a product
195 of the age of learning. Famed for his piety, religious learning, and
knowledge of Sanskrit and Pali, he chose, like his contemporaries, to
[192] write in Burmese, and he enriched Burmese prose. The prose before
him had been much neglected. The scholars were more interested in
verse. When they did write prose, they never succeeded in forgetting
that they were essentially verse-writers, and they used rhymed,
balanced, and measured phrases. They used too rich an imagery.
They broke into verse when they wanted to express any intensity of
feeling. Often they introduced Pali words into their writings when
there were more suitable Burmese ones. Burmese prose before U
Awbatha was in the same position as English prose before Dryden.
U Awbatha introduced a prose which was expressive and clear, simple
yet effective. It was used to convey varieties of feelings and emotions,
but it was always kept restrained and was never allowed to lose its
[871] clearness. His works are still well known and popular. The
importance of U Awbatha to Burmese language and literature can be
judged from the fact that from the junior forms to the Honours
course in Burmese at Rangoon University, his books are textbooks.[1]

538 There are hundreds of Birth Stories, but the most important
178 are the *Ten Big Jatakas*. They are much longer than the rest.
U Awbatha wrote Burmese prose versions of the eight longest
of those. He followed closely the Pali originals as far as the incidents
of the stories were concerned, but he portrayed character in detail,
and made the characters more lifelike and therefore more interesting.
The story was very well retold, but he was equally masterful in the
portrayal of character and in his understanding of human psychology.

He wrote his first *Jataka* in 1785 when Burmese arms were flashing victorious in Assam and Manipur, but vainglorious references to contemporary events found no place in his works. In the peaceful human. He drives home the moral—the power of knowledge and learning over all obstacles—with all the more force through making the good hero less good, and the bad villain less bad. Though he is quite artistically successful, he abandons the *Jataka*, presumably because, apart from the fact that an original story gives him more scope to use his dramatic powers, he cannot develop the character of the villain and of the hero as much as he wishes. In an earlier section I have stated how the conservative nature of the people and the danger that the comic spirit of both the actors and the audience might cause the drama to be profane gave rise to the stage convention that the Buddha should never be presented on the stage. That and the subsidiary conventions resulting from the same causes were against a dramatist making the villain more interesting and the hero less good. The only way out was to make the villain a comic character, as was done even in the earlier *Nibhatkhin*, and thus make the portrayal of him more sympathetic. U Kyin U, however, is not satisfied with that, and therefore he completely abandons the *Jataka* after writing two plays based on the Birth Stories. In *Daywagonban* the hero has villainous tendencies, but not satisfied with even that, in *Parpahein* the villain is the hero, for though he is shown to be the less worthy person to be king, he is the centre of our interest, as Macbeth the villain is the hero of Shakespeare's play. In the *Jatakas* the struggle is between the totally good and the totally bad, but in U Kyin U's play it is between the less good with the lesser. Withal, U Kyin U does not completely drive away the religious element. The best drama does not merely entertain but instructs, and we find some religious or [171] moral teaching in his plays. He accepts religion as a refuge from life, but he does so fully realizing that often religion is used as a mere excuse, for he makes a minister say in *Parpahein*: 'We give all excuses to live. We appeal to our religion, we appeal to this, we appeal to that . . .'

---

[1] A short account of U Awbatha is given in G. E. Harvey, op. cit., p. 269.

He realizes, too, that often the religion does not give complete comfort; Zayathein, in the same play, says:

> Until we reach Nirvana, we shall go through again and again this torture of grief, this torture of having to lose always the one we love . . . But this knowledge does not stay my tears . . . I am wise, I know my religion. But when it comes to grief, my experience and my learning cannot help me drowning in the ocean of sorrow.

The court dramatists, especially the minister, Myawaddi, showed how the interlude could display more interest in character, but the

536* 828 through good fortune he is given a princely sum of money, his regard for the silver halfpenny acquired through industry and thrift, and his love for the woman remain. In the hour of his acquisition of half the kingdom, he does not forget either his lover or his halfpenny. However, he soon loses his cheerfulness through having to fill his office with dignity and ability; the crown prince is no longer the laughing water-seller, indulging in mock-heroics, laughing unashamed at his own poverty. Wealth and power do not always make one happy and cheerful. To the previously contented water-seller ambition comes to disturb his peace of mind. He is next only to the king, but he wants to be king now—he, who was contented before with a halfpenny hidden safely away. His greed and ambition tempt him, to kill his friend and king, who is responsible for making him the crown prince. Fortunately, his old sense of honesty and gratitude still remain. The good and evil in him fight, and U Pon Nya gives us a fine picture of the struggle in the mind of the water-seller. In the end, the good wins. If the character of a person is essentially good, in the end, in spite of all temptations, the good in him will carry him through, just as the water-seller's character finally triumphs over ambition and greed that result from wealth and power. The king offers him the whole kingdom, he has but to say 'yes', and from being the lowest in the country, he will become the highest. But he refuses the offer. He has tasted both poverty and wealth and in the end he chooses poverty—the poverty and peace of a hermit's life. He has the courage to act according to his convictions, and we can but respect and admire his final action.[1]

4. *WIZAYA*

536* ● 779 [777] The story of this play is taken with slight modifications from a semi-religious work on the history of Buddhism in Ceylon, which is classed in the same category as a *Jataka*. In the original not only the history of Ceylon, but also some account of the history of the kingdom in India from which the island was colonized, was given. U Pon Nya, however, begins only at the point where the colonists leave their mother country, and ends his play at the point where a dynasty is assured to Ceylon.

536* The king is holding his court when he hears cries for help. On inquiry he learns that his elder son, Wizaya, has long been in the

---

[1] A translation of the play is given in appendix vi.

536* part, although there was no stage convention preventing women from
534 taking it up as a vocation. The head of the orchestra was also the
462 head of the troupe. He was the most learned and experienced
463 member, and he was responsible for the organization and financial
outlay, paying more or less fixed wages to the others, and taking the
profits himself. When engaged for a performance, the troupe was
paid by public subscription or by some philanthropic person, usually
an official, and therefore no charge for admission was made, all being
[565] welcome to it. The Burmese actors as a class, unlike their Elizabethan
counterparts, who could endow a College of God's Gift or buy a
coat-of-arms, were poor. But they never starved, for even the poorest
villages would welcome and feed them on their wanderings all over
the country. The troupe was one large family, and the children of the
members accompanied it. In spite of the prejudice against them
and their poverty, the actors loved their art, and enjoyed the performances
themselves.

536* There were many conventions connected with the stage, and they
can be divided into two classes: those imposed on the actors by
themselves, and those imposed by the fear of becoming unpopular
with the audience.

795 The actors never forgot that they were originally spirit-dancers,
536* and therefore they had conventions by which they showed their
indebtedness to spirit worship. Before the performance offerings of
food were made to the thirty-seven *nats*. As a curtain-raiser, there
was a performance by a dancer or chorus of dancers. Each wore a red
[533] cloth round the head—the sign of a spirit worshipper. Singing
invocations to the *nats* and dancing the appropriate dances, they asked
for protection by the spirits, while the orchestra played a bar from each
[751] of the thirty-seven *nat* tunes. It was supposed that if this convention
was broken, disaster would befall the troupe, the performance would
prove a failure, and the actors would become mad; but often these
conventions had been known to be broken, accidentally or otherwise.

536* The actors were looked upon as irreligious and immoral, and on
463 the slightest excuse, they were in danger of being considered profane.
554 Therefore, as has been stated, they took over the conventions from
[779] the *Nibhatkhin*. The Buddha was never impersonated, and an *arahat*
or saint only when absolutely necessary, and then by an able and
'serious' actor, who had to keep a fast that day. Not even a mild
joke was to be made against the Buddha or an *arahat*, although even
monks and the religion itself could be the butt of a clown's wit. But

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 API Burma
Burmese AP4

2

5. LANDING-STAGE IN THE TIDAL REGION.

131 Burma possessed no staples of trade to encourage
439 enterprise of the peaceable sort. Left entirely to her own resources, she developed her character in independence. It preserves a large measure of its original freshness and charm.

177 779 [349] Detached though Burma lay from the contact of other civilisation, the seed-corn of a spiritual influence was brought to her shore from afar, and took root and spread until it pervaded her whole life. The one extraneous influence under which she fell proved of a paramount order. But the inspiration of Buddhism was broadly human, not racial. Every people might take its message to heart in their own individual way. The restraints it enjoined and the ideals it held up became the occasions for Burma to unfold her own inmost nature. The abounding treasury of Buddhist legend furnished the subjects to exercise her poetic fancy. In the fifth century, A.D., long after Buddhism had declined at its source in India, and when it only prevailed in Ceylon, its real progress began among the people who were to give it an enduring home. Buddhism is popularly credited with five hundred millions of adherents. But the seven millions of Burma and perhaps a twentieth of that number in Ceylon, together with the half million Jains of India, are the practical Buddhists of the world. With the rest the profession has sunk to an empty name, as in China and Japan, or it is lax, as in Siam, or it is utterly transformed, as in Tibet.

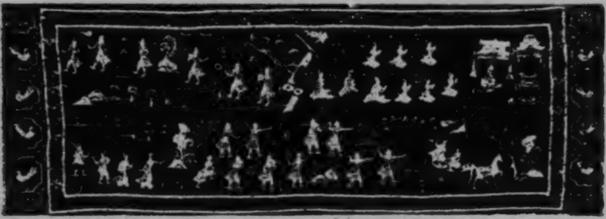
101 [172] [564] The phrase *Further India* gives point to a wide misconception. The surprise of so many persons on finding that the Burmans have no *caste*—to take the commonest instance—betrays the notion that Burma is part of India

6. RUINS OF CITY GATE, PAGAN.

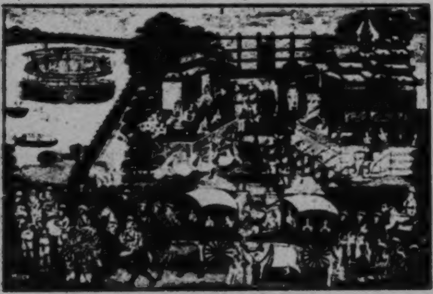
25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

175 religion which actuated the kings to build temples on such a scale. In 1300 A.D. the power of the Pagán kingdom had spent itself, in a great degree [779] owing, as the Burmans believe, to the drain of the temple-building. But the force of the religion was unabated. Burma fell a prey to Shan invaders, who snatched the dominion for nearly two hundred years but failed to consolidate it, splitting up into principalities like those of their native hills. The weakness of Burma allowed the Mun power to develop. The sixteenth century saw the rise of Pegu and the establishment of a shifting empire over Burma. Exhausted by wars, Pegu in turn declined and lay at the mercy of Siam (*Yôdayá*) when Paung (*Taung-ngu*) came to the rescue. In the seventeenth century the Paung-Peguan dynasty brought the Mun empire to its zenith, from which it waned in the eighteenth. Towards the middle of the latter century the Burmans under Aláung Payâ rose against the Mun garrisons, overthrew Pegu and finally established the empire of Burma. Arakán was incorporated; Siam was subjugated and made tributary for a time. The empire directed its ambition to the west. Manipúr was overrun [175 726 532] and the Arakanese pretensions in Chittagong were revived, which produced friction with the British power in India. Burman dominion had been a career of unbroken conquest in the memory of the then generation; the nation believed itself invincible. In the elation of their prowess at home they

[532 726]



9. BURMAN GENERAL GOING OUT TO WAR (APPLIQUE WORK).



10. BURMAN PICTURE OF THE FALL OF MANDALAY.

871
876
413
[524]
871
212
802

23. MARBLES (GON-HNYIN).

long wooden slate blackened with soot and rice-water (*thin-bôn*). The Burmese word-building is exceedingly regular and in the main phonetic (See appendix B). Reading is acquired in one term, without much effort on the part of pupil or
teacher. The Burmans have a pure decimal notation in which the bugbears
eleven and *twelve* are unrepresented. The Burmese *eleven* is literally "onety-
one." Children can count up to hundreds before they come to school
and can reckon up sums mentally. In arithmetic they are taught the
871 multiplication-table and a few rules of thumb (*bedin*). In addition to the
779 five Buddhist commandments (p. 16) and the objects of contemplation (p. 43),
which the children learn in their homes, they chant passages from the Pâli
867 scriptures in the school chorus and get other precepts by rote: such as the
869 category of duties to parents, teachers and elders, *viz.*, reverence, support,
mutual affection (*parčik*). They are taught the value of learning as an inalienable
possession, together with many precepts from the *Lawkanîti* and *Mingala-thôt;*
the conquests of the inner and outer worlds *Atwin-aungdyin*, *Apyin-aungdyin*, the
story of the Buddha (see *The Light of Asia*) and the legendary cosmogony.

212 As the result of this Buddhist system of schools, nearly half of the male
871 and about 3 per cent. of the female population can read and write, as compared
with 9 and 0·3 per cent. for men and women respectively in Bengal. The

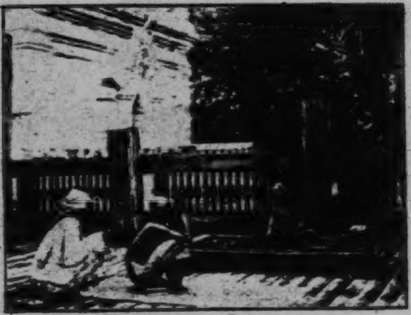
524

24. RACING TOY BOATS.

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 API Burma
Burmese AP4

792

792
735

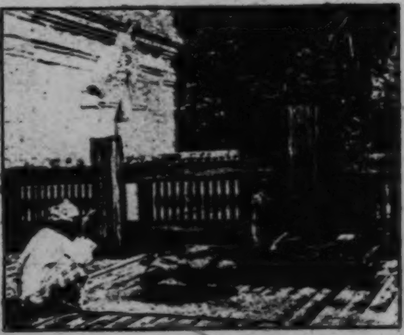


27. SHINLAUNG RENEWING HIS PRAYER.

the world, but not from observation by the world. Great as is the homage accorded to him by the laity, a recluse who should disgrace his cloth—a thing almost unknown — would be promptly unfrocked by them.

For their sustenance the novices and regular recluses depend upon alms. They receive these in kind and according to daily need. Their appeal is mute. The morning after his reception the novice with his brethren will halt in front of his own parents' house and the houses of the neighbours to receive such dole of food as is offered (No. 29). He will not look to right or left, but keep his eyes rooted on the ground, making no sign beyond raising the cover of his alms-bowl. The recluse may not ask for anything whatever, nor even express a predilection. The food, ripe or ready-cooked, as the case may be, is doled indiscriminately into the *thabêit* from the east side, usually by a woman of the house. A woman should not stand in the shadow of a recluse, of
a shrine, *sedi*, temple or image. She should not occupy an upper floor when a
[562] recluse happens to be beneath, nor enter a *Thein*, nor occupy a higher place with
respect to men (p. 72). Food given in a religious spirit, as above described, is
[576] called *sun*. The recluses when collecting *sun* are generally followed by a couple of scholars bearing a yoke and basket to receive larger offerings on behalf of the monastery (No. 41).

792 Those probationers who re-
871 main in the monastery for several
years—reckoned by Lents (*wa*)—
[805] and who aspire to full membership
of the Assembly, read with the
779 recluse Pâli texts of the Tripitaka,
and the commentaries on these,
[576] and commit portions, sometimes
whole books of the canon, to
memory. Recluses of standing and also laymen take part in these exercises.



28. GOYIN MAKING OBEISANCE.

792

41. YAHAN ON THE ROUND FOR SUN.

towards the higher spiritual condition of *Ayahát* and *Ayáttapò*. The primitive appellation is *Beikku* (Pâli *Bikku*), one dependent on alms. The spiritual state preceding *Yahán*, that of the man so imbued with the spirit of the Buddha's teaching as to desire membership of his Assembly, is called *Thawtapan*. The candidate for full membership must possess the qualifications for the degree of *goyín*, in addition to a knowledge of the rule of life of the *yahán* and a modicum of religious learning. Most *yahán* are *ngè-byu*—pure from youth—that is, have passed direct from their youthful novitiate to full membership. Men of any condition may be received, and at any age above twenty, if free from debt and other ties, but must undergo a fresh probation. Over and above the precepts observed by
792 the *goyín*, the *yahán* observes one hundred detailed injunctions. He must not
merely respect life, but also the means to life. He may not wantonly injure a
785 blade of grass. Cleanliness is particularly enjoined. A notable injunction is not
779 to lay up any store of food. He must not use a raised sleeping-place, though by day he reclines on the couches presented to the monastery. The *yahán* sweeps his dwelling, draws water, washes his clothing, and so forth, when there are not *goyín* or lay-disciples to perform these services for him. Otherwise his occupations are only those of teaching, study, and contemplation. In Lent the
[796] *yahán* remains indoors from sunset to sunrise. At this season he also frequently selects a forest retreat for contemplation in the early morning hours (*wussaung*).
792 The *yahán* practises confession to his
554 brethren of the Assembly, all of whom are equals, but who defer to one another, according to seniority, which is reckoned

42. BUDDHIST RECLUSE.

792
554

792
779

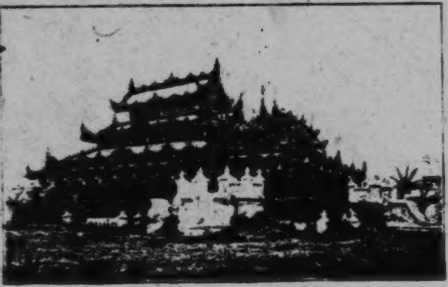
44. ANCIENT THEIN AT PAGAN.

not by age, but by the number of lenten seasons they have belonged to the Assembly. Vigils and restriction of night rest are not practised. The rule of life of the *yahán* is laid down in the *Wini* (*Vinaya Bitaka*), one of the three divisions (" baskets ") of the Buddhist scriptures. A *kambawá*, or breviary of scripture, relating to mem-
[212] bership of the Assembly, illuminated with lacquer on copper or ivory leaves, is read by turns by the five members of the conclave assembled for the reception of the new member. This solemnity is undertaken in the *thein*, a *wut* set apart for the *Thingá* alone. No lay persons enter the precincts, but they may be spectators from a distance. The new *yahán* is called *Upazin*, sojourner recluse, or assistant to the *Upyize*, or *Póndyí*, *Kindyí* (incumbent) of the monastery. In
[162] 1891 there were 13,613 *póndyí*, 6,668 sojourner *yahán*, and 13,500 probationers in the monasteries of Burma, which numbered 15,371, in a Buddhist population of about seven millions.

346 The dedication of the site for building such a *thein* (Pâli *sima*) is preceded
796 by the solemnity of *thein-thamôt*. Ground so dedicated can never be alienated to any other use. In this respect the *thein* is more sacred than the temples in
778 general. After the site has been levelled, it is surrounded with a trench, into which water is led. In the centre a small well is sunk (*ah-dwin*). The *yahán*, not less than twenty-four in number, assemble on the spot, over which a gay pavilion (*mandat*) has been erected, and wait for the water from the trench to
[792] percolate to the well. When this occurs, the site is said to have "taken" (*aung*). Otherwise it must be rejected. The *yahán* gather round the well and intone scriptural passages from a

45. YAHAN ASSEMBLED FOR DEDICATION OF THEIN.

792
735
[346]



51. KYAUNG AT THE CAPITAL.

792
346
554

carpets, cushions, handkerchiefs, tables, chairs, betel-boxes and spittoons, glassware and crockery, lamps, chandeliers, clocks, knicknacks and furniture, always to the exclusion of gold and silver. Gilt wares are permissible.

The strict *yahán* should prepare his shelter for himself, in an unfrequented place. But by the dispensation already referred to, he may avail himself of a solitary dwelling proffered for his use, and this is invariably the case. Not merely are these schools numerous, but they are the most spacious, substantial, and ornate edifices in the land. Many of them are of palatial size and appointments. The Burman finds nothing too good or too beautiful for those who subject themselves to the restraint of the recluse. The recluse on his part is conventionally oblivious of the magnificence that surrounds him. It is not for him to deprecate. The religious merit of the work, which furnishes the motive of the founder, is proportioned to the outlay upon it. From the bamboo *kyaung* in the forest costing a hundred rupees or less, individuals spend up to hundreds of thousands on the palatial monasteries of the towns (*cf.* p. 75).

792 When the incumbent of a monastery removes or dies, the senior sojourner (*upazín*) may receive his place as *pôndyí*. Otherwise an *upazín* is invited from elsewhere, or the *pôndyi* of another *kyaung* is prevailed upon to move. The *upazín* who has become *pôndyí* defers to his preceptor as before. Every monastery has a titular Pâli appellation, such as *Thila-ekkaya kyaung*, Letter-of-the-Law monastery.

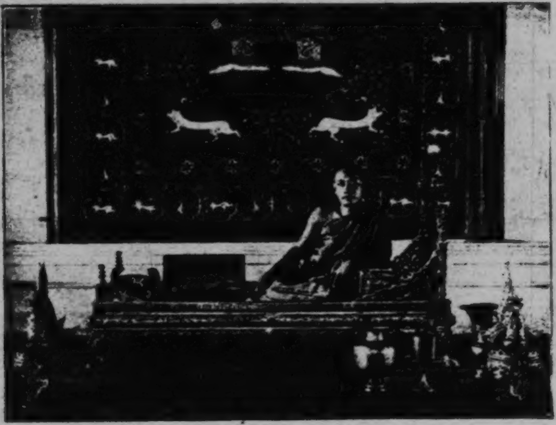
[346]
792
779

There is no hierarchy in the Assembly of *yahán*. But it commonly happens that a number of monasteries recognise a venerable teacher as referee upon matters of scholarship

52. PALACE KYAUNG.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

792 779 and doctrine. Such a group is called *gaing*, and its president *gaing-ôk*, his deputy *gaing-dauk*. In the same way a group recognise a *Sadáw—Sayá-daw*, or chief teacher. The whole body again defer to a chief *Sadáw*, usually the *yahán* who has been religious instructor to the King during his novitiate, and who is called *Thâthanabâing*.



34. YAHAN INSTALLED AS PONGYI.

792 785 In reaction against the comfort with which the laity endow the monasteries, the *yahán* periodically repair to country retreats for ten or twenty days at a time, either singly or in camps of many, for the sake of cultivating primitive use. Here each *yahán* has a dwelling of the narrowest compass and makes shift with the mere chattels ordained in the canon. But the laity, ever ready to minister to the *yahán*, convert these camps into centres of festivity for the

346

35. WUSSAUNG CAMP.

E

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

778 532

77. IMAGE OF THE BUDDHA ENCIRCLED BY FICUS.

(*ôt-deitha*), where, after dedication, they cease to be private property. The sole virtue of these symbols lies in the pious intention with which they are dedicated. The figure of the disciple Ānanda is frequently placed in the houses or taken on journeys (No. 316).

Besides the reputed relics of the Buddha, the miraculous foot-prints which legend assigns to him on rocks in Burma and Arakán are venerated (*Chidaw-yá*). Every Burman knows that Gawdama never travelled out of Bahár and was in all respects as other men; the licence of the legend is a poetic one. Models of these foot-prints are placed in the temple precincts. Here conventionality reaches the extreme; the sole is laid out with rule and compass and the surface mapped into diagrams of cabalistic import (No. 450).

779 346 538 The Buddhist scriptures should be deposited in masonry temples (*Bitaka-taik*, No. 66). These exist in a few places, but in general the scriptures are kept in special chests (*sadáik*) in the *kyaungs* (No. 453). The Shan-Tarôk (p. 146) place *sadáik* in their houses, and take pride in the volume of manuscripts these contain. The complete Páli text, together with the patristic commentaries and glosses, written on palm-leaf, would occupy a space of perhaps one hundred cubic feet. The text alone would cover about one thousand five hundred quarto pages of pica type. Only a few *kyaungs* possess the complete Tripitaka. Besides the scriptures, other ancient writings are treasured, such as the *kyanza* of cosmogony (see Sangermano), the *Zât* literature—the legendary lives of the Buddha in previous states of existence, embellished with romance of recent date.

78. IMAGE OF THE BUDDHA ON BALIN.

796
785

[793]

90. PAYA SUN-KAN.

(*Payá sun-kan*), or privately prepared, is conveyed. The day is devoted to contemplation, and the night is passed at the *zaydi*. Those who keep the duty-day present offerings at the *zedi* and the adjoining *kyaung*. At either of these places a *yahán* is invited to rehearse the precepts, which the laity chant verse by verse after his lead (*thila-kan*). Passages from other scriptures are added, with their interpretations. This is called *Tayá-haw*—the preaching of the Law. The great Mun King, Yazadiyit of Pegu, in the year 1400 A.D., is reported to have
[779 been so impressed by the preaching of a *yahán* that he abandoned a campaign
643 on which he had embarked. More than once in Burman history the peaceful
173] contest of building rival temples has been substituted for battle by opposing armies.

779 The Buddha has passed out of existence. While existent, all that the Buddha could accomplish for any being was the human service of showing him
788 the way to work out deliverance by individual effort. Self-reliance is the cardinal principle. There is none to hear prayer. The true significance of the popular worship is not apprehended unless this be borne in mind. No virtue can surpass that of the Inestimable Master (*Myasswa Payá*) who fulfilled the Law and bequeathed it to men. To cultivate the memory of his transcendent merit is itself meritorious in the first degree. Such is the personal side of the cult, to which the effigies of the founder appeal. Before the images of the Buddha are performed the gestures of homage, and are placed offerings symbolical of veneration — tapers lighted at the shrine, flowers

91. YAHAN RECITING THE PRECEPTS (TAYA-HAW).

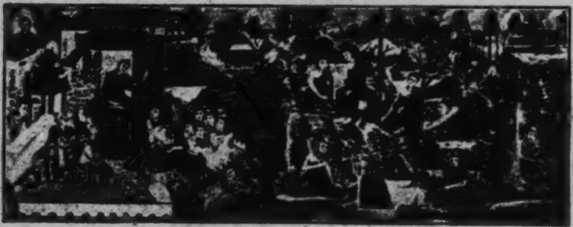
25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 API Burma
Burmese AP4

779
788

93. FAMILY OF A BURMAN NOTABLE AT THE SHRINE.

and fruit, gold-leaf laid on the image and its throne. No southern—that is, primitive Buddhist (see Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*)—lodges petitions with an image, as is the practice in countries where Buddhism is choked by fresh growth of the pagan ideas which it had arisen against. The Tibetan expedients are unheard of. Certain Buddhists in Burma, called *Paramát*, dispense with images. The mechanical aid to contemplation is the string of one hundred and eight beads (*badí*). Even the Buddhism of the common herd is no mere veneer, covering a substratum of the ancient animism (p. 186). The precepts of Buddhism are household words. The ideas and language of the race are pervaded by it. The personal aspect just described does not so engross the votary that he misses the doctrine of the Master. At the shrine the worshipper dwells on the *three gems* (*tharanagôn thômba*)—the BUDDHA, the LAW, the ASSEMBLY, and the other categories of the scheme. The BUDDHA (the Sage) was the supremely-enlightened one, filled with compassion for the subjects of *karma*, who extended to the universe the enlightenment that was the means of his own emancipation. The LAW (*Tayá*, *Tayamá*, Sanskr. *Dharma*, Pâli *Damma*).—By an impersonal cosmic process, sin works suffering and virtue effects deliverance. Re-incarnation is the legacy of sin and continues until the merit (*kûtho*), accumulated in successive
775 births (*bawa*), outweighs the demerit (*âkûtho*). Transmigration does not involve
779 transference of personality with consciousness of preceding states, but the

532



94. MODERN RELIGIOUS SUBJECT.

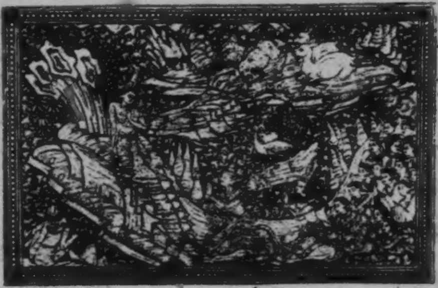
25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 API Burma
Burmese AP4

775
779

95. FAMILY OF A BURMAN NOTABLE LEAVING THE SHRINE.

continuity of an individual moral account (*Kan*, Pâli *Kamma*, Sanskr. *Karma*); although the Buddha enlightened his disciples about the previous identities of himself, of many other individuals and even lower creatures. Reincarnation provides the scope for atoning the injustices of individual lives, without debarring the salvation of any. The slowness of the process by which vast results are achieved conforms to the analogy of nature, which does not create, but evolves. The doctrine of *kan* is, in fact, an adumbration of the principle of persistence of force. But instead of regarding the results of actions in a given phase of existence as being separately dissipated, as modern science would imply, they are thought of as combined to form the starting-points of fresh phases of individual existence, until final equilibrium is attained (*Nirvâna*). As a flame results from the concurrence of given antecedent conditions, continues to burn while they are maintained, and is extinguished upon their dispersion, yet not without bequeathing results of its own, so it is with sentiency, which continually becomes the source of fresh desires, of temptation, sin, and consequent suffering. For the avoidance of sin, the five cardinal precepts are given, and precept within precept up to the minute rule of life of the *yahán*. At the root of all evil lies *Ta-hnâ* (Sanskr. *trishna*, thirst, concupiscence). From this fundamental evil proceed the forms *Lawba*, *Dawtha*, *Mawha* (greed, passion, ignorance), in the abstract, absence of *contentment*, absence of *self-control*, absence of *enlightenment*. With the extinction of selfish desire, virtuous conduct ensues, others are

[532]



96. THADYA PRINCE AND PRINCESS DOING HOMAGE TO THE BUDDHA IN A PREVIOUS INCARNATION—WETHANDAYA (SHWEZAWA WORK p. 121).

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

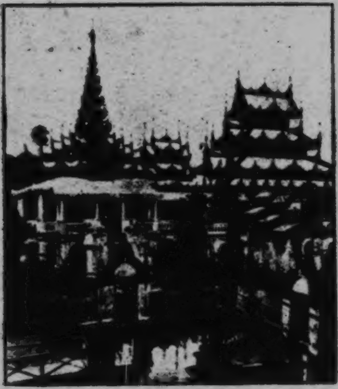
775 regarded as oneself, they are loved and are succoured, and by such actions
779 the consequences of sin are atoned for. As imperfections are corrected by self-

[778
346]

98. TEMPLE ZAYAT.

discipline, crimes are expiated by the pains of hell (*ngayè*). For the perception of the great aim, that is, extirpation of desire and all that desire entails, there are given the principles *Anéissa*, *Dôkka*, *Anátta* (change, trouble, dependence), which

[778
346]



99. DECADENT KYAUNG (p. 20).

the pious ponder as they tell their beads, and which may be paraphrased as the *impermanence* of all things, the *struggle* which the "unpitying rush of changes" involves and the *helplessness* of the event, which is "at the mercy of blind

779 forces." The only certain good within the control of man is the conduct of
his own acts. The final annihilation of desire, attained in the course
775 of lives upon lives of self-discipline, ushers in the serene state of *Nirvâna*
(*Neippan*, Pâli *Nibbân*), in which the subject of *karma* is no longer chained
to forms of existence by any debt of sin. At death is then attained the perfect
condition *Pari-nirvâna*, of which *Nirvâna* was the apprehension in life (Exposition
of Sadáw Û Wuziyama, of Thila-ekkaya *kyaung*). The spiritual stages to
Nirvâna are *Ayahát* and *Ayáttapô*. But it is not claimed for the holiest living
[792] recluse, much less by himself, that one of these stages has been attained.

100. CEREMONY OF YEZETOHA (p. 22).

779 Devotion to the ideal is the utmost. The third of the gems is the ASSEMBLY, "the spiritual family" of the Buddha, or communion of those who adopt to the full the aids towards holy life inculcated by him and who perpetuate his doctrine and example. Nevertheless, life in the world, though unfavourable to attainment of holiness, in nowise debars it.

The Law of Gawdama Buddha is to last for a period of five thousand years, one half of which has elapsed. It is then to be superseded by the law of a new Buddha. The metaphysics of Gawdama are studied by few (see Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, and Huxley, *Romanes Lecture*), but thanks to the network of schools, with which Buddhism has overspread Burma, its practical features are within the knowledge of all.

133. DABBING WITH FLY.

Next to the rice-industry the greatest industry of Burma is the catching and curing of fish. 226 [227] Unlike the rice, the fish is entirely for local consumption. The fisherman gets his living by taking life, [779] contrary to the cardinal injunction of the Buddha — "let him not destroy, or cause to be destroyed, any life at all, or sanction the acts of those who do so." The subterfuge which the specious resort to in using animal food, namely, that they had no share in the act of taking life, was thus provided against by the Buddha in the form of his injunction. The Burman is a kind master to his animals, but much cruel suffering results from [231] neglect of injuries, such as *dà*-cuts, often inflicted in temper. The merit of putting a suffering creature out of pain is not recognised or is denied. The reluctance to take life is operative in preventing the people at large from [262] obtaining other animal food than fish. But such is the craving for flesh that the Burmans will consume that of animals dead from natural causes and of many animals commonly rejected for food. The Burmans do not eat the flesh of the monkey, dog, parrot and crow. [227] The ways of taking fish are legion. Hooks are used with bait and also to mount a fly for dabbing (*ban laik*). A contrivance to be seen along the banks of every river is the *[illegible]*, a cage trap with falling door for large fish. Fish-spearing is practised by day and also by torch-light at night. On the largest scale, fish are taken by drawing off the water from the flat lagoons which form in the depressions of the *kwin* (*in*, p. 49). Screens of bamboo or reeds are set in the channels while the floods are

134. CAGING FISH SINGLY (SAUNG-TO).

215. LIMESTONE ROCKS.

The cordage used in 283
Burma is twisted from the bast of the *shaw* tree (*sterculia* varieties). For guys, stays, and standing rigging of boats, rattan is employed. Split rattan is used for strong ties, and withes of split bamboo (*hnt*) for common ties. The *shaw* rope is three and four stranded, and is twisted with native gear very like that of our own rope-walks. A long and even four-stranded rope is [171]
made by three men. This furnishes a good example of mechanical advancement, when compared with the method of the hill-people, who require six men to twist a much shorter rope of the same number of strands (Nos. 219–20). Shaw rope is smooth, but has not the flexibility of cocoanut-fibre and manila- [439]
fibre ropes, which are now imported. Fine cotton yarn is twisted into cord for making nets. A coarse jute fibre (*paissan*) is also twisted for net-making.

Silk-culture is under the ban of Buddhism for the same reason as fishery. 288
The greater part of the silk yarn used is brought from China, but a good 231
deal is produced locally by the *Zabéin* or *Yabéin*, a people speaking Burmese and resembling the Burmans in most respects, but despised by the latter. [779]
They are settled along the foot of the Pegu Yôma hill-range, on its eastern and western slopes, where they make clearings in the forest (*taungya*) and plant the 554
mulberry. They prepare a yellow silk yarn which, coarse and knotty as it is, 463]
is preferred for the best class of Burman silk cloths 288
(*luntayá*, No. 132). The 563
raw silk fetches thirty-five to forty rupees a viss. It is a perfect washing silk in all its dyes and wears a lifetime. In a few localities, silk-weaving is a special industry practised by men as well as women. Settlers from Manipúr

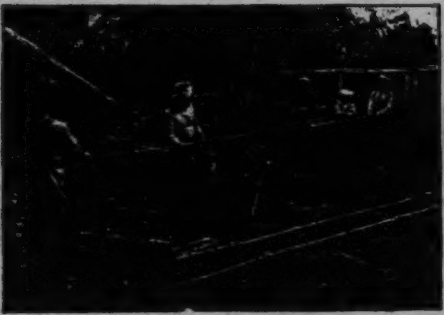
216. LIME-KILN.

25: Ferrars £-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 API Burma
Burmese AP4

219. ROPE-WALK.

inner side is brightly decorated with floss silks. 293 Gilt umbrellas (*shwe-di*) are [283] dedicated in the *kyaung*, but are not actually used. The white umbrella (*tibyu*) is [186] the emblem of sovereignty. The *tibyu* is set above the [779] ● images of the Buddha and above the remains of the *yahán*, who are assumed at their death to enter upon a higher spiritual stage. The [346] metal canopy surmounting the *zedi* is a conventionalised *ti* (No. 232). Of late, [177 European umbrellas have become a staple import of Burma. 439]

Lacquer-ware vessels and utensils—light, durable, and watertight—are made with the help of *thissi*, the exudation of the bark of *Melanorrhœa usitatissima*, a common tree of the *in* forest. 322 The gum blackens to jet 285 on exposure to the air. It dries slower than the "Japan black" of commerce, but is much tougher; it sells for two to three rupees a viss. *Thissi* is applied to wood turnery and bamboo wickerwork, either plain or with pigments, generally with vermilion. The commonest lacquer goods are platters (*byat* and *daunglan*), which are turned of teak or *yamane* wood and given two or three coats of *thissi*. After the platters, the principal article of lacquer-ware is the betel-box (*kun-it*). Coarse lacquering is done everywhere in the dry region, but the betel-box industry is peculiar to Pagán. The advantage of lacquer-ware and of a deep cover for the betel-box, is to keep the green leaf fresh. At first sight it appears incredible that these exact cylindrical boxes with their trays and covers, fitting as if each piece had been turned out of the block, should start from a wicker-work frame. Yet so it is; the models are plaited so true that the rest



[illegible] HILL-PEOPLE TWISTING ROPE.

[283]

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 API Burma
Burmese AP4

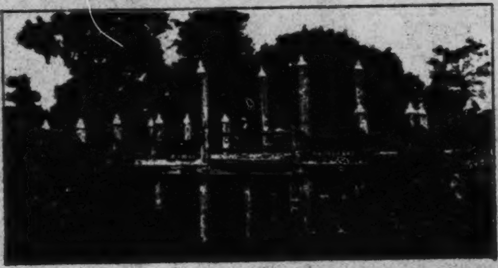
231
492
[491]

312. COUNTRY BRIDGE.

Shan hills, where alone breeding is a regular business. The Shan pony is stouter than the Burman, but not so hardy. The Burmans train their ponies to amble at a forced pace by sawing the bit as they urge them on; the ponies' mouths become hard in consequence. Ponies used to be worth twenty to fifty rupees, but now, many times more. Arab stud-horses have recently been introduced by the British Government. Ponies were used for riding only, doubtless owing to the want of roads and vehicles good enough for quick draught. There is little or no leather about the Burman saddle and accoutrements. The seat is a thick pad stuffed with cotton, with a hollow to leave the backbone free. The girth and stirrup holders are cotton web, the bridle and crupper are of thick cotton rope, plaited over with red cotton yarn; the stirrups are of brass, the plain bit is iron (No. 228). The Burmans hog their ponies' manes, but they admire a long natural tail. Very few animals are left entire.

484
485
[779]

Travel is made easy in Burma. There are rest-houses (*zayát*) for travellers at every town and village and at every stage on the road. Both these and the needful foot-bridges (*tadá*) are provided from religious motives. The foot-traveller will get a lift on his way by cart or boat~~, and will~~ take an oar or a hand at a job in return; those who can afford it pay their way. The Burman is a poor linguist, and is wholly engrossed with the language and ways of his own people. The aliens on his soil and the neighbouring races meet the Burman half way, saving him the need of learning languages and adopting from him their notions of culture and fashion. Encountering, as he does, within the limits of his travels, a material welfare little



313. ROYAL BRIDGE.

378. THE PALACE GARDENS.

the cause of suffering and 647
death, and the discredit re-
flected on officialdom by its 554
methods, lead the best ele-
ments of the population to [341]
shun office, as a touching of
pitch. The dearth of ability
and character in the govern-
ing classes leaves the governed
without efficient protection.
The religious motive further [779] ●
operates in withholding in-
formation about criminals. [674]
A pregnant category is that of the "five enemies"—Fire, Water, Robbers,
Rulers, Ill-wishers. The governors and deputies who acted as judges heard 695
causes at the *yôn*, an open shed in a public place. But every cause was
presented in the first instance at the house of the
official, and it is contrary to accepted ideas of polite-
ness to approach a superior empty-handed, even on
a mere visit of courtesy. The *pros* and *cons* of the
case were understood before the regular hearing.
At the hearing, the advocates of the parties (*ashé-ne*)
publicly presented their pleas and the evidence was
recorded. The Burmese form of oath is to take the [291]
kyanza in the hands, a book of imprecations which
the witness invokes on his head if he should speak
falsely. The judge or judges intimated their finding
to their clerks (*sayé*), who recorded it in official style
and read it out. The punishments awarded to [681]
criminals and the condition of prisoners were much
like those prevailing in Europe at the time of the
Renaissance. Every judgment of importance was [692]
registered in the *Hluttaw* or chancellery at the
capital, presided over by the four chief ministers
(*Wundyí*), through whom all royal commands to the
governors of provinces issued. There was no regular [671]
system of appeals. The Hindu code of Manú
served as a body of law, and statutes were decreed
by the kings; but *thônsan* (custom) supplied standards
of a more practical and stable nature.

379. ROYAL MAID OF HONOUR (APYODAW).

29: Slater

AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779

●

[For information on the theology and religious doctrines of Burmese Buddhism and allied cults, see category 116, pp. 1-82.]

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779
771

CHAPTER VI

IN CONCLUSION AND WITHOUT CONCLUSION

1. "*Except for Buddhism*"

As the result of this inquiry, it is possible to state certain conclusions. But the inquiry also brings us into that realm where man faces questions which seem beyond answer. We may, however, decide to frame some of these questions rather differently.

Our most definite conclusions relate to the character and definition of Buddhism, especially Southern Buddhism. If these are accepted, then we may claim to have challenged the classification which sometimes sets Buddhism in a special category, virtually seperated from the other great religions of the world. "Primitive Buddhism," remarks Dr. Matthews, "seem to stand alone among historical religions in having no doctrine of god and spirit."[1] This statement is typical of many references to Buddhism in the comparative study of religion. For one reason or another, Buddhism is isolated and quoted as an exception. There is everywhere, it is said, some recognition of the sacred — except in Hīnayāna Buddhism. Or again, it is said that the great religions are cultural, expressed in the life and institutions of some people — except for Southern Buddhism, which is monkish, cloistered and aloof from the community. Or again, the great religions have largely prevailed over more primitive ideas — except (so it is said) in Burma, where Buddhism, which "cannot appeal to the masses of any population,"[2] leaves the people to their Animism, with merely a lip-service to the higher faith. So the situation is sometimes represented — Southern Buddhism standing alone, so singular a religion that it is sometimes denied the name of religion and labelled a philosophy or a morality, unhappily (or happily) divorced from religion.

Questioning this misrepresentation, our first task has been to relate Southern Buddhism to the family of religions by interpreting its beliefs in the light of its cultural expression in Burma, where Hīnayāna teaching has been the dominant influence for eight centuries.

---

[1] W. R. Matthews, "The Idea of God" (*An Outline of Modern Knowledge*, p. 65).

[2] A. C. Bouquet, *Comparative Religion*, (new ed. 1945), chap. VII, p. 129.

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

We can imagine the bewilderment of some Burmese villager suddenly transported to a township in the West and told that here he will find what he has not known in his own country — a religion permeating the life of the community. How many things he would miss in this Western town! Here he would find no religious teachers making the daily round of the households, morning after morning; no system whereby every boy is not only schooled by his clergy but spends part of his youth in their establishment, sharing their life. He could scarcely be gainsaid if he insisted that his own religion, as represented in Burma, was not to be distinguished from other traditions by the fact that it was *less* in touch with the life of the community, but by the fact that it was *more* in touch with that life.

We have emphasised this relation of the organised Saṃgha to the community, because it is the clue to the solution of many of the questions discussed. It establishes the relation of Burmese Buddhism to Buddhism in general, since the monks are avowedly Hīnayāna; it establishes the true relation of Buddhism to Animism, since it exhibits the influence of Buddhism; and it establishes the relation of the monastic interpretation to the popular religion. Admittedly, a distinction can be made, as in other religions, between scholar and peasant, clergy and laity, but it is a mis-statement to disjoin them, speaking of 'two religions,' ignoring their inter-action, presenting the one phase as an arid intellectualism and the other as a superstitious travesty. Allowing for human nature and making all due qualifications, what we find, in general, is a religion which is both vital and intelligent.

Within this context, Nibbāna (to use the Pali term again) appears, not as a philosophical perplexity, but as a definitely religious aspiration. To the villager, Nibbāna may be remote, a further shore at the end of a long pilgrimage through many rebirths, but it is the ultimate fulfilment of his highest ideas of felicity — the Great Peace. The monk's conception is more allied to the moral and mental exercises by which he hopes to put an end to those confusions and those attachments to things transient which hinder his peace. In this sense, Nibbāna is Extinction, Cessation (of hindrances) — a negative concept. In another sense he makes a greater affirmation than the layman, for he prays that 'he may attain Nibbāna very quickly,' he has renounced the world in order to do so, and, from his present, imperfect achievement of inward serenity he can anticipate the end of the Path and the perfect fulfilment. But he knows that he can only do so dimly. Studying the scriptures and the *Abhidhamma* interpretations, he may speculate at times concerning this ultimate Nibbāna condition, as we have seen from Shwe Zan Aung's Dialogue. He knows, however, the limit of these speculations. "No intuition, no salvation."

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

779
771

Nor is the discipline by which he hopes to attain this saving vision merely intellectual. For scholar and peasant alike there is an ethical reference, which is one of the bonds which hold them together. The monk's Path is a Path of Purity — moral purification, as he is constantly reminded at the fortnightly *Uposatha* chapters. Similarly, the villager associates Nibbāna with his moral efforts to 'heap up *kutho*' (worthiness or merit). It is partly his sense of unworthiness which makes him consider Nibbāna a very distant prospect — a sense of remoteness corresponding to the more explicit negation in scholastic phraseology. Hence, for both monk and layman, there is an ethical reference, and this reference is partly responsible for the view that to those who have not yet attained, Nibbāna must necessarily be a Mystery.

In spite, however, of this element of negation, Nibbāna is fundamentally a positive concept, in keeping with that hopefulness and buoyancy which we have remarked as a characteristic of Burmese Buddhism. It is a religious aspiration — so definite that we have ventured to describe it as the religious ultimate of Southern Buddhism, in preference to *Dhamma*, and also to *Buddha*, who is indeed venerated, but is not regarded as divine: he is the Pathfinder but not the Goal.

We have suggested that it is this essentially religious character of the concept which may explain the apparent contradictions involved in its statement, the shifting from Yes to No and back to Yes, the fact that it can be affirmed as the sufficient goal of aspiration, a state of utter sanctity and bliss, yet also denoted as the Void, and finally said to be inexpressible. These conflicting terms have frequently been regarded as logical contradictions. As such they cannot be allowed to remain in the same house together. One must be expelled to make room for the other. Or they must be referred to different stages in the history of Buddhist thought.

While we consider that most of the apparently nihilistic passages in Buddhist literature are susceptible of an interpretation which escapes nihilism, we suggest that both affirmative and negative expressions should be accepted, not as terms of Buddhist philosophy, but as expressions of Buddhist religion. It is true that they have been discussed by Buddhists themselves from a philosophical standpoint, and they are often joined with philosophical concepts. Nevertheless their basic character is religious. As such they are not logical but paradoxical opposites, a distinction which is considered more fully below. Nibbāna, in the context of Burmese Buddhism, is a religious ultimate term, paradoxically expressed.

In support of this suggestion, we have attempted a cursory comparison with similar paradoxical expressions of other ultimate religious terms in

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

other traditions. We do not suggest that this excursion proves that Nibbāna must necessarily be a religious term, but simply that it proves there is no reason why it should not be. In making this statement, we challenge the view that the Nibbāna language indicates the arid scholasticism, non-religious thought and essentially philosophical character of Hīnayāna Buddhism. This might plausibly be argued if we were obliged to accept the opposition in the Nibbāna language as logical. It fails if we are allowed to regard it as paradoxical. 779 771

It should, perhaps, be remarked that we are not affirming that Burmese, and hence, Hīnayāna Buddhism is a religion because Nibbāna is a paradoxical religious expression. The movement of thought is the reverse. What we affirm is, first, that Burmese Buddhism is a religion, and hence that Nibbāna is a paradoxical religious expression.

The comparison with other religions has, perhaps, served a further purpose: it has indicated the fundamental character of the relationship of the Nibbāna language to Hinduism. Other comparisons, we maintain, have sometimes proved too much, and also too little: too much, in identifying Buddhism *exclusively* with this or that trend of thought in Indian tradition, in so far as such identifications have been based on interpretations of Nibbāna language, regarded as the expression of a philosophical concept; too little, in so far as they have limited the connection to some particular phase of Hinduism, or even to Hinduism alone. The reference is more basic. And it is universal. Nibbāna, as an ultimate religious term, paradoxically affirmed, relates Buddhism to all such quests of faith, similarly expressed. Its reference is to man's complex and struggling estimate of his fundamental human situation.

2. *The Realm of Religious Paradox*

To relate Buddhism to Hinduism, Christianity and other religious traditions does not, of course, imply identity. In order to clarify the nature of this relation it is necessary to distinguish more precisely what may be called the realm of religious paradox which our comparison has brought into view. Here we can hope for no more than tentative conclusions, since our survey was limited and the selection somewhat arbitrary, sufficient maybe to show that the paradoxical expression of an ultimate religious term was not peculiar to Hīnayāna Buddhism, but scarcely sufficient to decide the larger questions which arise from the study of religion in general. It may, however, be some contribution to emphasise that these questions exist. 000

Paradox, it was stated in our introductory chapter, involved an imaginative contrast, as distinct from logical opposition. This distinction practice of meditation, learning and love. Therefore because he forgot the 776 law of truth, his glory and dominion waned; his queen broke faith with 539 him, and took her pleasure with the Naga king, by whom she conceived." Her sons were born blind because "the breath of the Nagas had come upon them."[3]

The king soon died, and his successors only survived for brief periods. The Naga king from the spirit world is held responsible for their death. 'Twisting his way into the hollow of the palace post, the Naga prince came to the world of men and reigned seven years with the queen.'

A youth 'from a Brahmin village' resolved to end this state of affairs and seize the kingdom. He prepared himself by religious observance. 'He bathed his body and cleansed it; bowed down and did obeissance, worshipping the Three Gems, his great grandparents, grandfather, grandmother, mother and father, the spirits who keep watch over the great religion, the spirits who keep watch over cities and border villages. . . ."

On his way to the capital, halting at a village 'where of old the coming Buddhas sported and made merry,' the youth is encouraged by the god, Sakra, who 'with his fairy horse and fairy raiment went ahead with the prince in human guise.' Thus assisted, the youth invades the royal town, takes possession and is married to the Queen. Warned by Sakra to be watchful, the youth questions the Queen about the deaths of the previous kings. The Queen then confesses her intrigues with the Naga prince and helps him in a plot to seize the Naga, who is slain by the youthful and zealous conqueror.

NOTE B

BUDDHIST RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN BURMA

871
779
539

The chief lessons taught in the monastic schools in Burma are the following:

I. *The Three Jewels:*

I take refuge in the Buddha,
I take refuge in the Dhamma
I take refuge in the Saṃgha.

II. *The Five Precepts:*

Not to kill
Not to steal
Not to lie
Not to commit adultery
Not to drink strong drink.

---

[3] Nagas are "fabulous creatures that sleep deep down below:" cf. Scott, *The Burman*, Vol. I, chap. XXIX, p. 352.

871
779
539

III. *The Mingalā Thot:* The Song of Great Blessing. *(Mahāmaṅgala Sutta: Sutta Nipāta* II. 4).

"Thus have I heard:
Once when the Blessed One was at Jetavana in Anathapindika's Park, as night came on, a beautiful *Nat*[1] drew near, lighting up the whole place with his presence. He greeted the Blessed One, and then standing on one ide addressed him in this verse:

"What many men and deities
Desiring Bliss, have sought to find – –
Come tell me, Master, what it is
That brings most blessing to mankind."

To whom the Sage made answer:

"To quit the fools, to court the wise,
This is the highest Paradise:

"To pay respect where it is due,
So shall true blessing wait on you:

"Seek a fit place and there remain,
And strive self-knowledge to attain:

"If in past lives you've stored up merit
The fruits thereof you'll now inherit:

"Let wisdom skill and discipline
And gracious kindly words be thine:

"Tend parents, cherish wife and child,
Pursue a blameless life and mild.

"Live thou devout, give ample alms,
Protect thy kin from life's alarms;

"Do good, shun ill and ever shrink
From snare of spirituous drink:

"So do thou persevere in good.
This is the true Beatitude:

"Be humble, with thy lot content,
Grateful and ever reverent.

---

[1] I have here used the Burmese term, *Nat* instead of *deva*. Fausböll translates "deity" in S.B.E., Vol. X (Sutta Nipāta) p. 42.

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

871
779
539

"Study the law of righteousness,
This is the path that leads to Bliss.

"Patience, kind speech, as chance affords,
With holy men, religious words:

"The noble truths, austerity,
Nirvana here, and chastity.
This is true happiness.

"To live from all attachment free,
From sorrow and impurity,
This is the true security,
This is the Highest Bliss."

"The Mingala-thoht," says Sir George Scott, "is one of the first books the young scholar gets into his hands after he has learnt the ordinary formulae of worship. There are few Burmans . . . who cannot repeat the Pali text from end to end."[2]

"Side by side with the Pali, they learn the Burmese text."[3] A Burmese version quoted by Father Sangermano begins each verse, "O Nat!" e.g., "O Nat! know that to keep far from the company of the ignorant," etc.[4]

The version given above is quoted from the Appendix to *Modern Buddhism in Burma* (Purser and Saunders), pp. 95, 96. The metric form recalls the sing-song repetition of the young *koyins* as they commit the Song to memory.

See also F L Woodward's translation in *Some Sayings of the Buddha*, Oxford University Press, ("The World's Classics") which brings out the refrain to each verse (not given above): "Theirs is the greatest blessing."

Bishop Bigandet added the following footnote to his version: "Within a narrow compass, Buddha has condensed an abridgment of almost all moral virtues."[5]

III

SONG OF EIGHT VICTORIES

Stories and songs in honour of the Buddha also form part of Monastic education for the laity, especially this medieval poem, probably composed in Siam. Scenes from the poem are depicted on pagoda platforms.

---

[2] *The Burman*, Vol. II, p. 318.

[3] M.B.B., p. 12.

[4] *The Burmese Empire*, chap. XIV, p. 130.

[5] *Op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 123.

871
779
539

The first stanza refers to the legend of Māra, King of Death and Lord of Hell, who is said to have opposed Gautama's passage to Nibbāna.

> "By liberality did he
> The Sage attain to victory,
> Such was his chosen armoury!
> Māra, by all his host attended,
> With thousand flashing swords defended,
> On his war-elephant so proudly seated,
> In panoply of steel the Sage defeated.
> Be yours his glorious victory
> And yours its ample blessing be!"

The second stanza celebrates an encounter with a demon who used to devour children:

> "By patience and tranquility
> (Such was his chosen panoply)
> The Sage achieved the victory.
> Alavaka, the demon dread,
> The livelong night he combated,
> With heart of brass redoubtable,
> Fiercer than Māra, lord of hell.
> Be yours his glorious victory
> And yours its ample blessing be."

The third stanza refers to the last of the murderous attempts of Devadutta, the cousin and would-be supplanter of the Buddha. It is told that the Buddha's compassion had such an effect on the elephant Nalagiri that the brute fell before him and removed the dust from the Buddha's feet.

> "By the waters of his pity
> He won the glorious victory
> O'er Elephant Nalagiri!
> As the dreadful thunder crashing,
> As the lurid lightning flashing,
> As the jungle-fire encroaching,
> He beheld the brute approaching.
> Be yours his glorious victory
> And yours its ample blessing be!"

The fourth stanza relates an encounter with a robber; the fifth concerns a victory over slander as to Gautama's chastity; the sixth recounts his triumph over a false teacher; and the seventh points a moral by describing the victory attained by Moggallāna, one of Gautama's chief followers:

> "His pupil too by magic might
> Did aid him in the heroic fight...."

The eighth stanza refers to the Arahat's power to assume other forms and pass through the air unseen.

871 The poem therefore emphasises three lessons:
779 1. The honor due to the Buddha.
539 2. The blessing brought by the Buddha.
3. A challenge to the pupil to follow the Buddha's moral example.

The stanzas here quoted are from the version given by Purser and Saunders, M.B.B., pp. 99ff.

V.

THE NEMI ZAT

773 *Zat* is the Burmese for Jātaka (Buddhist Birth Story). Of these the Nemi,
539 Temi, Zeneka and Wethandaya Zats are especially popular, and form part of the Burmese child's education.

871 Reference has already been made in the text to the Wethanday Zat (Story of Prince Wessantara) which commends a prince who was willing to give away a kingdom, chariot, children and even his wife in his zeal for his own salvation.

The following is an extract from the Burmese version of the Nemi Zat given by Bishop Bigandet. As will be seen, it sets out the pains of hell and the blessings of heaven. The Burmese are not the only people who have considered such stories suitable to encourage young children in the right path!

The Buddha explains how he was, in a former existence, the ruler of the country of Mitila. As such, from a tender age he "displayed the most liberal and pious dispositions in making abundant alms and fervently observing all the religious practices. All the inhabitants of that kingdom followed his example.... During those happy times, hell seemed to have become quite unnecessary...

"On a certain day Nemi appeared to be most anxious to know which was the most excellent practice, the bestowing of alms, or the observance of the precepts." The King of the *Nat* realm himself came down from his glorious seat to give the answer, and, on his return, he eulogised King Nemi so strongly that the other *Nats* wished to see this virtuous prince. Accordingly a young *Nat*, named Matali, was commanded to escort the king to the *Nat* realm.

Stepping into the carriage sent for him, the king "abandoned himself to the guidance of his heavenly guide."

"Two roads are now opened before us," said Matali, "the one through the dismal dungeons, where the wicked are consigned to undergo punishment for their offences, and the other through the blissful seats, where the good are enjoying the rewards allotted to them for their virtues. Which of the two do you wish to follow?"

The prince said he wished to visit both places.

Matali answered in a mild tone of voice that his request should be complied with.

illustrates that with the Burmese, Manu had become only an 671
ordinary human being with the human trait of making mistakes, 773
so very different from the divine hermit of Hindu
lore.

By the thirteenth century, the customary law of the Burmese 671
came to be collected and written down by jurists and [178]
scholars. Throughout the intervening centuries until the British
conquest of the country, such collections of the law, and
also collections of judicial precedents were made from time to
time by scholars and jurists. But those collections were not
codes, and were not fully binding on the judges. In all these [177]
collections, Manu was mentioned as the law-giver, and this
lip-service paid to the prestige of the Hindu Code of Manu
has misled modern scholars, especially European scholars of
Burmese history and Burmese law, into thinking that the Burmese
law was merely the Hindu Code of Manu modified and
transplanted almost overnight in Burma of the eleventh century.

But in the eleventh century, the Burmese did become Buddhists 177
almost overnight. The Burmese took to Buddhism with 609
great enthusiasm, because the way of life preached by the 565
Buddha seemed to be identical with their own democratic 779
way of life. The Buddhistic revolt against the rigid caste system
of the Hindu society could be appreciated by the Burmese,
who called the Hindu half-playfully and half-seriously, "kula"
or "caste people," and the Buddhistic emphasis on the equality
of all men appealed to the Burmese with their classless society
and their own emphasis on individual freedom. The [671]
jurists and the scholars waxed enthusiastic over Buddhism,
and they gave a Buddhistic coloring and a Buddhistic background
to their collections of Burmese customary law. This
misled the early British administrators and judges in Burma
into thinking that Burmese customary law was Buddhistic in
origin, and gave to it the misleading official name of "Burmese
Buddhist Law."

The impact of the English legal system introduced into 000